KAKOS

BADNESS AND ANTI-VALUE IN CLASSICAL ANTIQUITY

Edited by

INEKE SLUITER

RALPH M. ROSEN

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KAKOS

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Badness and Anti-Value in Classical Antiquity

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Ineke Sluiter and Ralph M. Rosen

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CONTENTS

List of Contributors vii

Chapter 1. General Introduction 1
Ineke Sluiter

Chapter 2. Generic Ethics and the Problem of Badness in Pindar .. 29
Kathryn Morgan

Chapter 3. Ugliness and Value in the *Life of Aesop* 59
Jeremy B. Lefkowitz

Chapter 4. Beetle Tracks: Entomology, Scatology and the Discourse of Abuse 83
Deborah Steiner

Chapter 5. 'Bad' Language in Aristophanes 119
Ian C. Storey

Chapter 6. Badness and Intentionality in Aristophanes' *Frogs* 143
Ralph M. Rosen

Chapter 7. Imagining Bad Citizenship in Classical Athens: Aristophanes' *Ecclesiazusae* 730–876 169
Matthew R. Christ

Chapter 8. The Bad Boyfriend, the Flatterer and the Sykophant: Related Forms of the *kakos* in Democratic Athens 185
Nick Fisher

Chapter 9. *KAKIA* in Aristotle 233
J.J. Mulhern

Chapter 10. *Pathos Phaulon*: Aristotle and the Rhetoric of *Phthonos* ... 255
Ed Sanders

Chapter 11. The Disgrace of Matter in Ancient Aesthetics 283
James I. Porter

Chapter 12. With Malice Aforethought: The Ethics of *malitia* on Stage and at Law 319
Elaine Fantham

Chapter 13. 'The Mind of an Ass and the Impudence of a Dog': A Scholar Gone Bad........ 335
Cynthia Damon

Chapter 14. From Vice to Virtue: the Denigration and Rehabilitation of *superbia* in Ancient Rome 365
Yelena Baraz

Chapter 15. *Omnis Malignitas est Virtuti Contraria: Malignitas* as a Term of Aesthetic Evaluation from Horace to Tacitus' *Dialogus de Oratoribus* 399
Christopher S. Van Den Berg

Chapter 16. The Representation and Role of Badness in Seneca's Moral Teaching: A Case From the *Naturales Quaestiones* (*NQ* 1.16) 433
Florence Limburg

Chapter 17. Nature's Monster: Caligula as *exemplum* in Seneca's *Dialogues* 451
Amanda Wilcox

Chapter 18. Heliogabalus, a Monster on the Roman Throne: The Literary Construction of a 'Bad' Emperor 477
Martijn Icks

Index of Greek Terms 489
Index of Latin Terms 493
Index Locorum 495
General Index 509

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CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Ineke Sluiter

1. *Introduction*

Living together in any society entails a constant mutual apportioning of credit and blame, and equally constant attempts to claim credit and reject blame for ourselves. In discussing actions, people and even stories, we negotiate to align our values to such an extent that meaningful joint action becomes possible.[1] The volume before you looks at the way the 'blame' part of this story works out in different domains in classical antiquity. It concentrates primarily on the *discourse* of badness and evil in social interactions of different kinds, rather than on the way the ancient Greeks and Romans dealt with 'the problem of Evil', conveniently divided in modern studies into natural, moral, and metaphysical evil.[2]

A few words about that choice may be in order. In her recent and excellent study of evil in modern thought, Susan Neiman demonstrates how major historical events have influenced the philosophical debate on 'evil', and have in part made certain conceptions 'impossible to think'. The devastating natural disaster at Lisbon created an invincible obstacle for those trying to reconcile natural evil with notions of a theodicy. Auschwitz silenced philosophers through the sheer incomprehensibility and incommensurability with verbal accounts of the events

[1] See Tilly 2008; on 'alignment', Appiah 2006, 29.

[2] E.g., Burton Russell 1988, 1 ff. In the modern period, the prototype of natural evil was the 1755 Lisbon earthquake, followed by terrible fires and floods, which killed innumerable people (see Neiman 2002, 1 ff. and *passim*). For orientation on recent work on evil, see also Ricoeur 1986 and Safranski 1997. Moral evil is defined by Burton Russell (1988, 1) as taking place 'when an intelligent being knowingly and deliberately inflicts suffering upon another sentient being'. Metaphysical evil is conceptualized as a characteristic of a flawed created world (the problem of theodicy).

for which it came to be shorthand.[3] 'Thinking Evil' in this way and on this scale was never central to ancient thought at any time, particulary not before the advent of Gnosticism and Christianity.[4] On the other hand, antiquity hardly suffered from a lack of imagination in thinking of all kinds of malicious agents, often under the guise of demons: even before the time of Gnosticism and early Christianity, there was a plethora of these beings, especially in folk metaphysics, who could be blamed for all the unhappiness and misery that may befall an unsuspecting human being, and there was apparently quite a bit of specialization going on among them. One demon could 'jump upon you' and cause a nightmare, other scary creatures could make your children die, and specific agents were responsible for smashing all the pots in your kitchen.[5] If this volume chooses to focus on a less colorful, but no less exciting aspect of 'badness' in antiquity, the choice is not *faute de mieux*.[6]

As it is, the present study of the discursive and argumentative roles of 'badness' forms part of a larger research project on the language, discourse and conceptualization of values in classical antiquity.[7] We are interested in the use, organization, function and effects of value discourse in different cultural and historical contexts in classical antiquity.

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[3] Neiman 2002.

[4] It can be argued that ancient philosophy in particular is focused on eudaemonism and the attainment of virtue and the good life to such an extent that it will take a revolution in moral psychology in order for thinkers to start focusing on vice and evil. On the other hand, the topic of theodicy is an issue that comes up regularly from Homer onwards (*Il.* 24.527–540, for which see below section 3.1; *Od.* 1.33ff., Lloyd Jones 1983).

[5] Syntrips and Smaragos are the 'Smashers' conjured up in the pseudo-Herodotean *Life of Homer* 32 (ll. 447–448). For discussion of these and other demons with bad intentions, such as Gello, Lamia, Mormo, Ephialtes (who jumps upon you to cause nightmares), or the unnamed demon who is accused by Teucer of having broken his bow-string (*Il.* 15.468), see Brenk 1986, esp. 2073–2079. For various 'cutting' demons, see Faraone 2001. For an alarming example of what gods in Greek tragedy are capable of, see the role of Lyssa in Euripides *Hercules Furens* (with Lee 1982, Desch 1986, Lawrence 1998, Padel 1995). See further Frankfurter 2006.

[6] We have Goethe on our side here. In the 'classical Walpurgis night' in Goethe's *Faust II*, the devil Mephistopheles finds himself completely spurned by all the scary and ugly female creatures and witches from ancient Thessaly. The devil is an anachronism in classical antiquity, is the clear message of the episode, he is a barbarian in Greece (*Faust II* 6923ff.) and eventually takes refuge 'in seinem Hillenpfuhl' (*Faust II* 8032f.). See Reinhardt 1945; Gelzer 1983, 1990, 1994.

[7] Studied in the biennial Penn–Leiden Colloquia on Ancient Values, held alternately in Leiden and Philadelphia from 2000 onwards.

Our starting point is usually an element from the ancient lexicon, in order to firmly tie our research to ancient rather than modern conceptualizations. Through extrapolation, this approach allows room for more conceptually oriented questions.

The whole project started out with the discourse of manliness and courage, or better, of Greek ἀνδρεία and Roman *virtus*. This individual virtue resists straight self-attribution, and the contexts in which the discourse of manly courage is activated are rarely purely descriptive: rather than being an objective characterization of perceived behaviors, *andreia* discourse provokes and stimulates certain courses of actions through its positive associations with danger and fighting. In fact, *andreia* discourse in itself may suffice to create a context of danger faced willingly and knowingly ('framing'), even if that context is as remote from the prototypical military one as, e.g., giving a show speech or avoiding war altogether.

From *andreia*, mostly relevant to individuals (or to a group of individuals regarded as a unity), we turned to 'free speech' (παρρησία), which presupposes a community with power relationships and interacting agents. This second topic brought up not only issues of citizenship and community values, but also of censorship and strategies of circumvention. After these two very different examples of actual values, we turned to the conceptual organization of value systems in convenient clusters, focusing on 'city' and 'countryside' as conceptual 'containers' of value judgments. This binary opposition could be implemented in very different ways: on the one hand, a sophisticated, refined, 'good' city with concomitant values in the areas of, for example, language use, intellectual life, etc. will have as its negative corollary the boorish, backwards, vulgar countryside; but on the other hand, a version with a pure and authentic countryside as opposed to a degenerate city is equally thinkable. Most importantly, the fact that such binary oppositions were readily available created the space for a discourse in which the boundaries were not so clear-cut. The opposition city–countryside functions as a helpful cognitive organizational device.[8]

In this fourth volume, we take the *via negativa*: we will be exploring the negative foils, the anti-values, against which positive value notions are conceptualized and calibrated in classical antiquity. What is it that people feel that they themselves and others must avoid or repudiate,

[8] For the results of these earlier parts of the research program, see Rosen and Sluiter 2003, Sluiter and Rosen 2004, Rosen and Sluiter 2006.

what evaluative labels do they employ to persuade people, how do they argue with them and how do they adapt their rhetoric to specific contexts? We have chosen the deliberately broad Greek term κακός as the organizing principle of this volume, but the various chapters will venture well beyond this lexical starting point, and not only in Greek. We will be equally interested in its Latin analogue *malus*, and the many other cognate terms for concepts of 'badness' in Roman culture (such as *pravus*, *nequam* or *vitiosus*). Both κακός and *malus* are hypernyms and, as we will see for κακός in particular in section 3, they are radically underdescriptive and underdetermined, i.e. as such they leave open an enormous interpretive range when one wonders what precisely the presumed 'badness' consists in; context and situation are crucial to channel our interpretation. We will also be looking at some more specific terms in this volume, such as φθόνος, *malitia*, *malignitas* and *superbia*. 'Bad' and 'badness' are powerful, but multivalent (dis-)qualifiers, which may be used to indicate 'functional' badness or low quality, social badness or inferiority, moral badness, and ultimately even some forms of cosmic or theological evil.

In this introductory chapter we will first illustrate the anxieties provoked even today by the rhetorical power of an element in the lexicon as underdetermined as we are claiming is the case for Greek *kakos*: in the U.S., this anxiety has led to an attempt to develop a 'depravity scale' (section 2). We will then give some examples, taken from Homer, tragedy and Plato, of the fundamental importance of context for the interpretation of κακός and cognates (section 3). Finally, we will give an overview of the topics discussed in the other chapters of this volume (section 4).

2. *The power of underdetermination*

In U.S. law, the question of whether the way in which a crime was executed constitutes an aggravating factor is important for determining the ensuing punishment: it may make the difference between a life prison sentence or the death penalty. Different states have different assorted terms to describe the crimes that qualify: Oklahoma calls them 'especially heinous, atrocious, or cruel', Georgia has 'outrageously or wantonly vile, horrible or inhuman', Arizona labels them 'especially heinous, cruel, or depraved'. The U.S. Supreme Court has repeatedly expressed discomfort with the unconstitutional vagueness of phrases

such as these,[9] but it did sustain a 1990 Arizona death sentence for a murder that was committed 'in an especially heinous, cruel or depraved manner', because Arizona had defined that phrase narrowly enough to give the operative terms substance and hence make them constitutionally sufficient. For example, the Arizona Supreme Court states that 'a crime is committed in an especially cruel manner when the perpetrator inflicts mental anguish or physical abuse before the victim's death'. And a crime is committed in an especially 'depraved' manner when the perpetrator 'relishes the murder, evidencing debasement or perversion', or 'shows an indifference to the suffering of the victim and evidences a sense of pleasure' in the killing. The U.S. Supreme Court wisely recognized that 'the proper degree of definition of an aggravating factor of this nature is not susceptible of mathematical precision'; it is constitutionally sufficient when it gives meaningful guidance to the sentencer.[10] Adam Liptak makes the following comment (2007):

> The list of what qualifies as depraved in Arizona, however, includes the senselessness of the crime, the helplessness of the victim, the apparent relishing of the murder, the age of the victim, 'needless mutilation' (as opposed, one supposes, to the kind necessary to the murder), the fact that the victim had been kind to the killer, special bullets, 'gratuitous violence' and 'total disregard for human life'. As Justice Harry A. Blackmun said in a dissent in the 1990 case, 'there would appear to be few first-degree murders the Arizona Supreme Court would not define as especially heinous or depraved'.

Forensic psychiatrist Michael Welner has taken up the challenge of giving workable and narrowly defined criteria for what all these terms actually *mean* in a legal context. Can their meaning be stabilized or narrowly enough defined so that they can come to function as objective criteria? His research project is the design of a so-called 'depravity scale', or 'depravity standard', which should offer objective, or at least inter-subjective, criteria to determine whether a criminal act is 'very depraved', 'somewhat depraved', or 'not depraved'.[11] An exten-

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[9] It struck down the constitutionality of Oklahoma's aggravating circumstances 'especially heinous, atrocious, or cruel' in *Maynard* v. *Cartwright, 486 U.S. 356* (1988), and Georgia's 'outrageously or wantonly vile, horrible or inhuman' in *Godfrey* v. *Georgia, 446 U.S. 420* (1980).

[10] See for the description of the case and the ruling of the Supreme Court, *Walton* v. *Arizona* (88–7351) *497 U.S. 639* (1990), and the materials from the Supreme Court collection of Cornell University Law School at *http://www.law.cornell.edu/supct/html/88–7351* (last consulted 8 January 2008).

[11] For Welner's project, see *https://depravityscale.org/depscale*, last consulted 9 January

sive survey will be used to establish a consensus view on the scalarity of depravity. Welner claims that this 'first project ever developed in which citizens shape future criminal sentencing standards'[12] will allow him to replace 'emotion-driven judgments' with 'evidence-based determinations of the evil of a crime'.[13] At the same time, he remarks 'what makes the worst of crimes is too visceral an idea to be tackled merely by intellect alone'.[14] Welner is not the only one who resists the elusiveness of value discourse. Michael Stone, Professor of clinical psychiatry at Columbia, is reported to claim that there are twenty-two varieties of killers, and that he 'has ranked them in order of evil'.[15]

Reading this volume should make anyone sceptical of how realistic these enterprises are. The vocabulary of horror, repudiation and rejection may not be as susceptible of definition as, e.g., terms such as 'homicide' and 'murder'; as evaluative terms they will always remain part of the rhetoric of blame, and hence the tools of the prosecution. Voting on what is 'really' bad is in fact what juries already do. The very fact that terms such as 'heinous' (or, for that matter, 'evil' or 'bad') are underdetermined gives them their rhetorical punch. For persuasive purposes, underdescriptiveness can be an advantage; but in a legal context, it makes people nervous, and rightly so.[16] The depravity scale project is a desperate attempt to preserve the rhetoric of 'evil', while containing it at the same time. Studying the use of its ancient counterparts may give us pause in regarding this as a viable plan of action.

2008. Alternatively, he speaks of a crime's features carrying 'a statistical weight of highly depraved, moderately depraved, or minimally depraved', see 'Defining Evil: an Interview with Dr Michael Welner', ABC News, 27 July 2007 (to be found on the Depravity Scale Blog, see https://depravityscale.org/depscale). I would like to thank Geraldine Henchy for bringing the 'depravity scale' to my attention.

[12] See *https://depravityscale.org/depscale*, homepage.

[13] Welner 2007. One might object to the legal consequences and imprecision of the use of the terms 'heinous, atrocious etc.', but surely the role of the *juries* in determining whether these notions apply is supposed to perform precisely the function that Welner here envisages for his depravity scale. Emotional reactions (also a form of judgment) could actually be very useful in distinguishing the truly evil from the merely criminal, see Nussbaum 2001; 2004 (with strong warning *against* using the emotion of disgust in this way).

[14] 'Defining Evil: an Interview with Dr Michael Welner', ABC News, 27 July 2007 (to be found on the Depravity Scale Blog, see *https://depravityscale.org/depscale*).

[15] Adam Liptak, 'Adding Method to Judging Mayhem', *The New York Times*, 2 April 2007.

[16] It is no accident that a defining moment in our recent Western history of thinking about evil was the Eichmann trial: the courtroom setting forces societies into reaching clear-cut verdicts in highly complex cases. See Neiman 2002, 271 ff.

3. *Some notes on the semantics of κακός*[17]

The most crucial aspects of the semantics of κακός are first of all that κακός is an overwhelmingly *poetic* word; secondly, that one should draw a sharp distinction between the personal use and the neuter (κακά 'bad things'); third, that the term κακός is highly underdescriptive and therefore malleable to a point not easily matched by any other evaluative term.

The poetic nature of κακός is made clear by tables 1–3 below.

Table 1: κακός in different Greek genres

Corpus	*Words*	*Instances*	*Weigthed Freq./10K.*
Greek tragedy	249401	976.25	39.14
Greek drama	344198	1170.25	34.00
Greek poetry	671140	1713.50	25.53
Greek hexameter	231321	440.75	19.05
Greek texts	4844153	4347.75	8.98
Greek rhetoric	611184	489.50	8.01
Greek prose	4173013	2634.25	6.31
DDBDP Greek Texts	3519477	99.75	0.28

Table 2: Top ten authors for usage of κακός

Author	*Words*	*Instances*	*Weigthed Freq./10K.*
Sophocles	61714	279	45.21
Euripides	147583	588.50	39.88
Hesiod	16193	54	33.35
Aeschylus	40104	108.75	27.12
Epictetus	84176	216.25	25.69
Aristophanes	94797	194	20.46
Lysias	56315	112.25	19.93
Homer	199046	373.75	18.78
Theocritus	21261	39.25	18.46
Andocides	17424	29.75	17.07

[17] I am grateful to Michiel Cock, Tazuko van Berkel, Wouter Groen and Myrthe Bartels for collecting some of the data which I will present here, and in particular to Michiel Cock for his work on the Perseus frequency tables.

Table 3: Red lantern for usage of κακός

Author	*Words*	*Instances*	*Weigthed Freq./10K.*
Euclid	152651	0	0

These tables are compressed versions of the frequency data that can be derived from Perseus.[18] Table 1 represents the distribution of the lexeme KAKOS across the different Greek genres with notable differences between the extremes of Greek tragedy, in which the lexeme has a weighted frequency of over 39 instances per 10,000 words, as opposed to the Duke Databank of Documentary Papyri, which has fewer than 0.3 per 10,000 words. The category of 'Greek prose' stands at 6.31 instances per 10,000 words. Table 2 shows the top ten of authors in terms of their use of κακός: the three tragedians are in the top four (again, the weighted frequency is the most informative data), and the highest ranking prose author is Epictetus, owing, no doubt, to his ethical preoccupation with and Stoic views on κακά ('bad things', neuter). The mathematician Euclid has absolutely no use for κακός (table 3).

There is an important difference between the use of neuter κακόν/κακά and the personal uses of the masculine and feminine κακός/κακή. The neuter usually refers to all the unfortunate things that befall human beings, illness, death, etc., without there necessarily being a morally reprehensible agent. The personal use of the lexeme belongs to the language of societal valuation, and imparts a negative judgment of social, moral, or functional depreciation.[19]

Both the personal and the neuter uses share in the third significant characteristic of the KAKOS lexeme. κακός functions as a blanket sign of condemnation, disapproval, in short, negative evaluation. Something is not good—but what exactly is wrong with it? The lexeme itself is underdescriptive and leaves the precise nature of the problem unspecified.[20] It is always the context that will decide what is wrong or bad

[18] See *www.perseus.tufts.edu*; Perseus LSJ s.v. *kakos*.

[19] There is one intermediary category: in reviewing the uses of the term, Michiel Cock drew attention to the fact that especially the neuter plural *kaka* is frequently used as the object of verbs of thinking, planning, scheming; from the lemma in LSJ this is not apparent.

[20] See Appiah 2006, 46; 57–60 (and references) for such 'thin' concepts. They are 'open-textured' in that one can argue about what they apply to. The application of words such as κακός is 'essentially contestable'.

in any given particular instance, and if one is interested in ancient value systems, it is worth the trouble to press that context for clues about the *positive* value that is in this case off-set by κακός. Most commonly, that positive value will be identifiable. We will illustrate this with some examples taken from Homer (section 3.1), tragedy (section 3.2), and Plato (section 3.2).

3.1. *Achilles on evil*

Our first example is the oldest theory of evil in Greek literature, which Homer puts into the mouth of Achilles.[21] As part of his consolation to Priam, Achilles points out that grief is simply part of what the gods have assigned to human beings as their lot in life. It is only the gods who are without sorrow (*Il.* 24.522–527).[22] And then Achilles offers the following theory of 'evil' in human life (*Il.* 24.527–540):

> There are two great jars that stand on the floor of Zeus's halls
> and hold his gifts, our miseries (*kakôn*) one, the other blessings.
> When Zeus who loves the lightning mixes gifts for a man,
> now he meets with misfortune (*kakôi*), now good times (*esthlôi*) in turn.
> When Zeus dispenses gifts from the jar of sorrows (*lugrôn*) only,
> he makes a man an outcast (*lôbêton*)—brutal, ravenous hunger (*kakê boubrôstis*)
> drives him down the face of the shining earth,
> stalking far and wide, cursed (*ou tetimenos*) by gods and men.
> So with my father, Peleus. What glittering gifts
> the gods rained down from the day that he was born!
> He excelled all men in wealth and pride of place,
> he lorded the Myrmidons, and mortal that he was,
> they gave the man an immortal goddess for a wife.
> Yes, but even on him the Father piled hardships (*kakon*),
> no powerful race of princes born in his royal halls,
> only a single son he fathered, doomed at birth (tr. Fagles)

> δοιοὶ γάρ τε πίθοι κατακείαται ἐν Διὸς οὔδει
> δώρων οἷα δίδωσι κακῶν, ἕτερος δὲ ἑάων·
> ᾧ μέν κ' ἀμμίξας δώῃ Ζεὺς τερπικέραυνος,

---

[21] For the *Odyssey*, esp. on 1.33, see Lloyd-Jones 1983, 11, Laumann 1988; for evil in the *Odyssey*, Hankey 1990, Alt 1994. For Hesiod, see von Fritz 1966, Laumann 1988, Reeder 1995.

[22] For a description of the Homeric use of ἄλγεα ἔχειν, see Rijksbaron 1991; Rijksbaron 1997 explores the difference between different expressions for sorrow, grief, pain, afflictions (ἄχος/ἄχεα, κῆδος/κήδεα, ὀϊζύς, πένθος, πόνος, κακά).

ἄλλοτε μέν τε κακῷ ὅ γε κύρεται, ἄλλοτε δ' ἐσθλῷ·
ᾧ δέ κε τῶν λυγρῶν δώῃ, λωβητὸν ἔθηκε,
καί ἑ κακὴ βούβρωστις ἐπὶ χθόνα δῖαν ἐλαύνει,
φοιτᾷ δ' οὔτε θεοῖσι τετιμένος οὔτε βροτοῖσιν.
ὣς μὲν καὶ Πηλῆϊ θεοὶ δόσαν ἀγλαὰ δῶρα
ἐκ γενετῆς· πάντας γὰρ ἐπ' ἀνθρώπους ἐκέκαστο
ὄλβῳ τε πλούτῳ τε, ἄνασσε δὲ Μυρμιδόνεσσι,
καί οἱ θνητῷ ἐόντι θεὰν ποίησαν ἄκοιτιν.
ἀλλ' ἐπὶ καὶ τῷ θῆκε θεὸς κακόν, ὅττί οἱ οὔ τι
παίδων ἐν μεγάροισι γονὴ γένετο κρειόντων,
ἀλλ' ἕνα παῖδα τέκεν παναώριον·

No human being gets only good things. The best one can hope for is a mixture of good and bad.[23] But what does Achilles think it means when one gets 'bad things' (*kakôn*)? He is not thinking of, for example, physical suffering, death or illness. The background to Achilles' conception of 'evil' is his heroic value system, with its premium on honor (*timê*) and *kleos*, the renown that reverberates around the world when one's deeds are sung by a poet. In fact, the context specifies what the underdescriptive term 'badness' is referring to here: one is made the object of *lôbê* (531), a very strong term indicating a total lack of respect.[24] Getting grief means being reviled. A second characteristic is that one is driven over the face of the earth by a *kakê boubrôstis*. Even in antiquity there was discussion about the precise meaning of this expression. Does it indicate a kind of fly that bites the oxen and drives them crazy, comparable to *oistros*? Or does it refer to famine, hunger and poverty?[25] In either case, it is probably the ensuing ignominy and degradation that is at issue.[26] The third effect of Zeus's bestowing 'evil' is that one wanders

[23] In antiquity, there were two different interpretations of the jars of Zeus: Pl. *R.* 2.379d interprets the lines as referring to two jars only (as we do), but in a passage denying that the gods can be the cause of bad things; P. *P.* 3.81 assumes there are two jars of evil, and one of good things.

[24] Richardson *ad loc.* points out that the term λωβητόν is used for the first time here. Leaf *ad loc.* cites Eustathius' explanation for λωβητός: ὁ ἐφύβριστος καὶ ἄτιμος ('a butt for the insults of men').

[25] In both cases the term derives from βιβρώσκω 'to eat', in the first case βου- indicating the object (cf. βούπρηστις for a beetle that poisons cattle and makes them swell up); while in the second βου- functions as an intensifier (cf. βουλιμία for ravenous hunger) (see Scholia *ad loc.*). Macleod *ad loc.* notes that 'starvation is singled out among misfortunes above all for the degradation it brings'. It is also related to the vagrant life indicated by φοιτᾷ, 533.

[26] Badness, poverty, and low status have the same package-deal relationship in the lexeme KAKOS as in the *poneria* group. Πονηρός 'bad' is related to πόνος. Πονέω itself is an intensive form of πένομαι, cf. πενία 'poverty'. Similarly, μοχθηρός 'bad' is

over the face of the earth without *timê*, as is spelled out in οὔτε θεοῖσι τετιμένος οὔτε βροτοῖσιν. 'Getting κακά' to Achilles means the *absence* of the positive values of *kleos* and *timê*. But he also thinks of a form that is more directly relevant to both his own father and to Priam: lacking the support of one's only child in one's old age, because the son dies an untimely death (24.538 ff.).[27] Evil in the *Iliad* is very Achillean indeed.

3.2. *ὦ παγκάκιστε in Greek tragedy*

If Achilles gave us an idea of *what* is bad from his heroic perspective, Greek tragedy is a good place to look for *who* is bad. In Greek tragedy, the vocative phrase ὦ παγκάκιστε (and corresponding feminine and plural) occurs twice in Sophocles, and eight times in Euripides. Doubly reinforced, by the superlative and the intensifier παν-, it is clear that this form of κακός offers a very strong personal rejection of one's interlocutor. But on what grounds precisely? In some fragmentary occurrences this is hard to make out.[28] But in those cases where we have more context, a clear pattern is visible. Most commonly, the vocative is provoked by what is perceived to be the worst violation of the expectations the speaker had reasonably entertained of the behavior of the addressee, a behavior that ought to have fitted their social relationship, and the kind of reciprocity that goes with it.

In Sophocles' *Antigone*, for example, Creon uses this phrase when he thinks Haemon, by going head-to-head with him, has violated the respect he owed to his father.[29] Another father-to-son exchange occurs in Sophocles' *Trachiniae*, when the dying Heracles thinks that his son Hyllus has chosen the side of his mother Deianira, whom Heracles

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related to μόχθος. Ancient grammarians propose a different accentuation for μοχθηρός and πονηρός meaning 'having a bad character', and μοχθῆρος/μόχθηρος and πόνηρος meaning 'having troubles', see Ammon. *Diff.* 326; Hdn. *Gramm.Gr.* III 1.197 (difference not observed in text editions except in some vocatives). See Storey in this volume.

[27] See Strauss 1993, Felson 1999. For this theme in the *Odyssey*, see Simon 1974.

[28] E. fr. 57.1 N. [= *Fragmenta Alexandri* 38.1] is a two-line fragment: ὦ παγκάκιστοι καὶ τὸ δοῦλον οὐ λόγῳ / ἔχοντες, ἀλλὰ τῇ τύχῃ κεκτημένοι: here, social worthlessness seems to be at stake, given the combination with τὸ δοῦλον. E. fr. 666.1 N., again a two-line fragment: ὦ παγκακίστη καὶ γυνή· τί γὰρ λέγων / μεῖζόν σε τοῦδ' ὄνειδος ἐξείποι τις ἄν; Presumably, the person addressed is actually a woman (as marked by the feminine vocative), although the word γυνή itself is used as a term of abuse. No further context available. Similarly, E. fr. 939.1 N. (fragment of just the one line) ὦ παγκάκιστα χθόνια γῆς παιδεύματα. I will also not discuss E. *Suppl.* 513 and E. *HF* 731.

[29] S. *Ant.* 742 (Creon to Haemon): ὦ παγκάκιστε, διὰ δίκης ἰὼν πατρί; the participle phrase explains the reason why Creon uses this form of address.

believes purposely poisoned him: Hyllus' taking her side would be the worst possible betrayal of the normal father-son relationship.[30] In both cases, the reason for using this particular term of abuse is given explicitly.

In Euripides, the word is used similarly.[31] In the *Hippolytus*, Phaedra is desperate when she finds out that her nurse has betrayed her and made overtures on her behalf to Hippolytus, a horrible violation of what she sees as their φιλία-relationship—and again the kind of relationship that is supposed to have been violated is spelled out (E. *Hipp.* 682–694):

You most evil woman, destroyer of your *philoi*,
What have you done to me …
…
May you perish, you, and whoever else is willing
To 'help' their friends, against their will, in evil ways.[32]

ὦ παγκακίστη καὶ φίλων διαφθορεῦ,
οἷ' εἰργάσω με …
…
ὄλοιο καὶ σὺ χὤστις ἄκοντας φίλους
πρόθυμός ἐστι μὴ καλῶς εὐεργετεῖν.

In just a couple of lines, Phaedra twice links the nurse's behavior with a miscarriage of *philia* (*philôn, philous*). The phrase καὶ φίλων διαφθορεῦ specifies and helps direct the interpretation of the underdescriptive, but powerfully emotive, vocative ὦ παγκακίστη.

As my final example, let us look at what may be the most famous use of the term: in Medea's great speech to Jason, the same pattern may be observed. Medea believes that Jason's behavior has violated legitimate and conventional expectations of the φιλία-relationship that she believes exists between them.[33] But in her case, the rhetorical movement

[30] S. *Tr.* 1124. Heracles follows this up in 1137, when Hyllus has ventured the opinion that his mother had been well intentioned: χρήστ', ὦ κάκιστε, πατέρα σὸν κτείνασα δρᾷ; ('does she do well, you κάκιστε, when she has killed your father?!'). The vocative again comments on the betrayal of Hyllus' relationship with his father when he was saying something in defense of his mother.

[31] The most general use occurs in the *Cyclops* (689), when the Cyclops yells in the general direction of Odysseus, who has just blinded him: ὦ παγκάκιστε, ποῦ ποτ' εἶ;

[32] Unless otherwise stated, translations are my own.

[33] The relevance of the theme of *philia* to the *Medea* is well brought out by Sicking 1998: a 'wife' does not fit the classical *philia* pattern very well. Medea usurps a man's position, in claiming the reciprocity that comes with *philia*; this may be part of the explanation of the miscommunication between Jason and Medea.

is a little more complex. Medea's opening volley bristles with value terminology (E. *Med.* 465–472):

> You worst of men, for that is the strongest insult
> That I can express in words for your lack of manliness.
> You came to me, you came although you are my worst *ekhthros*?
> ...
> This is not courage, nor is it bravery
> To look your *philoi* in the face when you have treated them badly,
> No, it is the greatest of all diseases among men,
> Shamelessness.

> ὦ παγκάκιστε, τοῦτο γάρ σ' εἰπεῖν ἔχω
> γλώσσῃ μέγιστον εἰς ἀνανδρίαν κακόν,
> ἦλθες πρὸς ἡμᾶς, ἦλθες ἔχθιστος γεγώς
> ...
> οὔτοι θράσος τόδ' ἐστὶν οὐδ' εὐτολμία,
> φίλους κακῶς δράσαντ' ἐναντίον βλέπειν,
> ἀλλ' ἡ μεγίστη τῶν ἐν ἀνθρώποις νόσων
> πασῶν, ἀναίδει'.

παγκάκιστε is made to do double work in this opening. At first it seems as if the term will gain its local color from its combination with ἀνανδρία, θράσος and εὐτολμία: we specify our interpretation of κακός accordingly (and correctly) as 'cowardly'. Total baseness apparently consists in total cowardice or lack of manly courage. But then it soon turns out that the yardstick of *both* 'badness' *and* 'manly courage' is a special one in this case: it is whether or not one respects the demands of reciprocity imposed by the standard of *philia.* Jason has turned into an ἔχθιστος, who has treated his *philoi* badly. His very turning up is an act of shamelessness, and that is a special form of lack of manliness (*anandria*). From line 475, Medea goes on to set out in detail what benefits she has bestowed on Jason—and what did he do in return? (E. *Med.* 488ff.):

> And although that is what I did for you, you worst of men,
> You betrayed me.

> καὶ ταῦθ' ὑφ' ἡμῶν, *ὦ κάκιστ' ἀνδρῶν*, παθὼν
> προύδωκας ἡμᾶς.

The vocative neatly recalls the opening. In Medea's eyes, Jason's 'badness' consists of a fatal failure to reciprocate, a betrayal of their φιλία. Once again, it is the context that allows us to fill out the picture of general 'badness' that we have been offered in the underdescriptive, but emotionally powerful term παγκάκιστος.

3.3. *Avoiding badness in Plato: Socrates in the* Apology

In regular speeches for the defense or prosecution, the local context specifying 'badness' is first and foremost whatever happens to be at issue in the trial. Obviously, given the nature of ancient judiciary rhetoric, general questions of character and reputation will also be important. Notably, as the contributions by Christ and Fisher in this volume will show, issues of citizenship resurface time and again. But when the defendant has made the search for the essential nature of virtue his life mission, both 'badness' and 'goodness' will be redefined. In a courtroom setting, how does one make this new form of 'badness' understandable to a jury with more conventional views? That is the problem of Plato's *Apology*. Our starting point will be a sudden accumulation of terms of badness in 39a7–b6.[34]

In his third speech, Socrates addresses the jurors after having been condemned to death.[35] The first part of this speech targets those jurors who voted against him, and sets out Socrates' vision of why he lost. This was not because he was at a loss for words (ἀπορίᾳ λόγων, 38d6), Socrates says, but because of a lack on his part of rashness and shamelessness (τόλμης καὶ ἀναισχυντίας, 38d7),[36] and an unwillingness to engage in the kind of self-debasing and grovelling rhetoric that he deemed unworthy of himself (ἀνάξια ἐμοῦ, 38e1) and not befitting a free citizen (ἀνελεύθερον, 38e3): Socrates never begged for his life.[37] He then compares the dangers of being sued with those of warfare, which obviously evokes readily recognizable notions of manliness and courage (ἀνδρεία).[38] In either case, fleeing death is possible by ignominious means such as throwing away one's weapons or begging for one's life. But the central question should not be how to flee death, but how to avoid πονηρία, 'moral badness' (39a7). This should be perfectly understandable within the conventional value system of an average Athenian.

[34] In this section, too, our emphasis will be on the discourse and rhetoric of 'badness' rather than on 'evil in Plato', for which see Chilcott 1923, Hager 1987, Nightingale 1996, O'Brien 1999.

[35] Slings–De Strycker 1994, 201ff. discusses the unlikelihood of this last address (or, indeed, any last address) having actually taken place at the trial.

[36] Both are examples of courage gone wrong.

[37] Obviously, this is part of the constant opposition of the discourse of philosophical inquiry and judicial rhetoric that is one of the leading themes of the *Apology*.

[38] See Sluiter and Rosen 2003, 5f.; Sluiter forthcoming.

There are bad ways to behave both when faced with the dangers of war and those of the Athenian courts.

At this point, all of a sudden words for badness start piling up: Socrates may be caught by death, but his adversaries are overtaken by κακία, 'badness', 39b4 (the term is a direct substitution for πονηρία). They may have managed to inflict a death sentence on him, but truth itself has left on them the permanent mark of μοχθηρία and ἀδικία, 'badness and injustice' (39b6): πονηρία, κακία, μοχθηρία, ἀδικία: these words clearly form a climax, and they take us along the *via negativa* to the central concerns of the *Apology*.[39]

For the philosopher who is the embodiment of the philosophical life engages in *arête* discourse throughout the *Apology*. In an earlier passage, he framed the central question in deciding on how to conduct oneself as follows (Pl. *Ap*. 28b5 ff.):

> You do not speak well, Sir, if you think a man in whom there is even a little merit ought to consider danger of life or death, and not rather regard this only, when he does things, whether the things he does are right or wrong and the acts of a good or a bad man. (tr. Fowler)
>
> οὐ καλῶς λέγεις, ὦ ἄνθρωπε, εἰ οἴει δεῖν κίνδυνον ὑπολογίζεσθαι τοῦ ζῆν ἢ τεθνάναι ἄνδρα ὅτου τι καὶ σμικρὸν ὄφελός ἐστιν, ἀλλ' οὐκ ἐκεῖνο μόνον σκοπεῖν ὅταν πράττῃ, πότερον *δίκαια ἢ ἄδικα* πράττει, καὶ ἀνδρὸς *ἀγαθοῦ* ἔργα ἢ *κακοῦ*.

The same comparison with war that we saw in the third speech is evoked here, and it is strengthened by the subsequent mentioning of Achilles. Socrates as a philosophical hero is a direct heir to Achilles, the Homeric hero.[40]

Socrates' decision not to beg for his life had also come up before: In an extended passage in his first speech, Socrates had already defended his choice of a form of discourse thoroughly antithetical to what was customary in court. There, too, his views are presented as guided by what is καλόν (34e2–3), and he brings to bear a full complement of

[39] It is, of course, no accident that the series culminates in *adikia*: not only is that the term most appropriately invoked in a legal context, *adikia* is also most suitable for indicating 'badness' in interpersonal relationships, and in many ways the best antonym to 'excellence', ἀρετή. This is how *adikia* is imagined in the thought-experiment of Gyges' ring (Pl. *R*. 2), which creates an imaginary situation in which extreme badness is possible because there will be no consequences.

[40] See Pl. *Ap*. 28c1 ff. and Sluiter and Rosen 2003, 22. On Socrates and Achilles, see Hobbs 2000. On the philopher as the new embodiment of manly courage, see Smoes 1995 and Sluiter forthcoming.

Greek value terms (virtues) to defend this particular decision not to beg for his life. It would interfere with σοφία, ἀνδρεία, and ἀρετή (35a2), something which obviously causes a bad reputation (δόξα, 35b9). Worse than damage to reputations, such a way of gaining acquittal would not be δίκαιον (35b9). Trying to sway the jury rather than inform and persuade them would also fly in the face of εὐσεβεία and what is ὅσιον, since it would essentially corrupt the jurors' judgment and make nonsense of their oath. Socrates' final argument is that, if he should agree to beg and grovel, that would prove the charge that he did not believe in the gods. So the judges should not require him to do things that are neither καλά, nor δίκαια, nor ὅσια (35c7–8).

Socrates' presentation is consistent throughout the *Apology*: he frames his mission as a military service with the god as his commanding officer (28e4ff.), and his philosophical engagement with his fellow-citizens is a form of religious observance (*latreia*, 23c1), since it was inspired by his investigation of the Delphic oracle. The comparison of the dangers of legal trial and that of war turns both into tests of innermost values. The sudden accumulation of negative value terms (*ponêria, kakia, mokhthêria, adikia*) that was our starting-point evokes a quite specific set of positive values off-set by them: the philosophical lexicon of virtue. When Socrates talks about 'badness', his frame of reference is very different from that of Achilles in the *Iliad* or of Medea in Euripides' tragedy. Socrates uses it to ascribe to the condemning jurors a fundamentally perverted philosophical value system.[41]

3.4. *Avoiding badness in Plato II: Crito in the* Crito

Not all participants in Socratic dialogues share this perspective, however, even if they try their best. An instructive window on the use of value terms in the *Apology* that we just discussed is offered by Crito's attempt to persuade Socrates to escape from prison in the *Crito*. Crito's best effort is his long speech, *Cri.* 45a6–46a8.[42] This speech is not studied very much, although it is a perfect demonstration of where Socratic teaching has left a good-hearted and entirely well-intending friend of

[41] Cf. Slings–De Strycker 1994, 211.

[42] He had already tried the argument that it would be ruinous to his own (Crito's) reputation to have people think that he valued his money over saving the life of his friend (Pl. *Cri.* 44c): but of course, the opinion of 'the many' was not enough to persuade Socrates. The issue of reputation will resurface later, see below.

his, who has still failed to grasp the essentials of Socrates' thought on the good life. Crito starts with the arguments that would have been foremost in his own mind, had he been Socrates. After all, he is a well-to-do Athenian, who understands money. So he tries to reassure Socrates—probably quite irrelevantly—that the financial burden on his friends will be quite limited: the people who will escort him into safety have not asked for much money, the people who will need to be bought off so that they will not engage in sycophantic prosecutions are also cheap. Crito has plenty of money himself, but he will not even have to pay for everything himself, since more sponsors had offered themselves. And Crito has also provided a good place for Socrates to go—this speaks directly to a concern voiced by Socrates himself in the *Apology*,[43] although Crito may have failed to realize what precisely worried Socrates about staying abroad.

Crito's next point is better adapted to the personal views of his friend (Pl. *Cri.* 45c5):

> And besides, Socrates, it seems to me the thing you are undertaking to do is not even right (*dikaion*)—betraying yourself (*prodounai*) when you might save yourself … And moreover, I think you are abandoning (*prodidonai*) your children, too, for when you might bring them up and educate them all the way, you are going to desert them (*katalipôn*) and go away, and, so far as you are concerned (*to son meros*), their fortune in life will be whatever they happen to meet with … But you seem to me to be choosing the laziest way; and you ought to choose as a good (*agathos*) and brave (*andreios*) man would choose, especially you who have been saying that you cared for virtue (*arête*) throughout your life. (tr. Fowler, adapted)
>
> ἔτι δέ, ὦ Σώκρατες, οὐδὲ *δίκαιόν* μοι δοκεῖς ἐπιχειρεῖν πρᾶγμα, σαυτὸν *προδοῦναι*, ἐξὸν σωθῆναι … πρὸς δε τούτοις καὶ τοὺς ὑεῖς τοὺς σαυτοῦ ἔμοιγε δοκεῖς *προδιδόναι*, οὕς σοι ἐξὸν καὶ ἐκθρέψαι καὶ ἐκπαιδεῦσαι οἰχήσῃ *καταλιπών*, καὶ τὸ σὸν μέρος ὅτι ἂν τύχωσι τοῦτο πράξουσιν … (45d5 ff.) σὺ δέ μοι δοκεῖς τὰ ῥᾳθυμότατα αἱρεῖσθαι. χρὴ δέ, ἅπερ ἂν ἀνὴρ *ἀγαθὸς καὶ ἀνδρεῖος* ἕλοιτο, ταῦτα αἱρεῖσθαι, φάσκοντά γε δὴ *ἀρετῆς* διὰ παντὸς τοῦ βίου ἐπιμελεῖσθαι.

This argument is *ad hominem*, and it echoes Socrates' words in the *Apology*.[44] Socrates' course of action ought to be determined by ethical

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[43] Cf. Pl. *Ap.* 37c4 ff., the point being that no other place would offer the opportunity for philosophical discussion.

[44] Note that Socrates himself will in his turn have the personified Laws echo Crito's words *to son meros*: disobeying the Laws means that one allows the state to fall apart 'for one's own part', 'in as far as that is up to one' (*to son meros*, Pl. *Cri.* 50b), or 'so far as

norms of goodness, virtue, courage. He cannot leave his post (both *prodidonai* 'to betray', and *katalipôn* 'desert' suggest military desertion and cowardice). He should live up to his constant claims that he has cared for virtue throughout his life. Crito must have been pretty sure he was scoring points here, but he cannot keep it up for long. Rather than investigate what it is that 'goodness' means under these circumstances, Crito lets his argument slip away by reverting to conventional concerns for reputation. Thus, in his case, too, the 'badness' he opposes to the choices of a 'good man' reflects his own value system (and that of the average Athenian orator)[45] rather than that of Socrates (45d9 ff.):

> So I am ashamed both for you and for us, your friends, and I am afraid people will think that this whole affair of yours has been conducted with a sort of cowardice (*anandria*) on our part [C. then mentions that it should never have come to a trial, and the unfortunate way in which the actual trial was conducted…] and finally they will think, as the crowning absurdity of the whole affair, that this opportunity has escaped us through some baseness and cowardice (*kakiai tini kai anandriai*) on our part, since we did not save you and you did not save yourself … Take care, Socrates, that these things not be disgraceful, as well as evil, both to you and to us.
>
> ὡς ἔγωγε καὶ ὑπὲρ σοῦ καὶ ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν τῶν σῶν ἐπιτηδείων αἰσχύνομαι μὴ δόξῃ ἅπαν τὸ πρᾶγμα τὸ περὶ σὲ ἀνανδρίᾳ τινὶ τῇ ἡμετέρᾳ πεπρᾶχθαι … καὶ τὸ τελευταῖον δὴ τουτί, ὥσπερ κατάγελως τῆς πράξεως, *κακίᾳ τινὶ καὶ ἀνανδρίᾳ* τῇ ἡμετέρᾳ διαπεφευγέναι ἡμᾶς δοκεῖν, οἵτινές σε οὐχὶ ἐσώσαμεν οὐδὲ σὺ σαυτόν … ταῦτα οὖν, ὦ Σώκρατες, ὅρα μὴ ἅμα τῷ κακῷ καὶ αἰσχρὰ ᾖ σοί τε καὶ ἡμῖν.

Just as Crito was beginning to discuss the moral aspects of Socrates' decision, he allowed himself to revert to issues of reputation: δόξῃ, δοκεῖν, becoming an object of ridicule (*katagelôs*); but he concludes as if he had discussed the true nature of the case, as if staying in prison

one is able' (*kath' hoson dunasai*, Pl. *Cri.* 51b). This is not to say that the state will actually be undone through the actions of one person (or that Socrates' sons will really have a miserable life), but simply that this particular agent disregards the interest of the state, c.q. of the children; cf. Kraut 1984, 42.

45 Cf. Dover 1994^2, 227. Note that the shame argument is played upon by Socrates himself in *Ap.* 29a: the Athenians will be blamed and reviled for having killed Socrates. Socrates uses this as an argument against those who voted against them, and one must assume they may have been sensitive to it; clearly other Socratic teaching has not taken stock with them. Colaiaco 2001, 181.

and allowing the execution to take place may really *be* shameful, in the same way that, as Crito's words suggest, dying really *is* the *kakon* that he makes it out to be. Socrates, of course, will not be slow to point out that the actual moral merits or demerits of Crito's position have not been investigated yet. *Kakia* for Socrates was a perversion of his philosophical value system, a crude disregard for moral excellence; for Crito, it is the cowardice and lack of manliness that prevents someone from winning a deserved reputation for standing by his friends.

From Achilles, through tragedy, to philosophy, who or what is bad is not decided on the basis of the KAKOS vocabulary alone. The values of the speaker will show up in analyzing the rhetoric of the texts and they will help specify *e contrario* what kind of condemnation precisely we are dealing with in the underdetermined (dis)qualifier KAKOS.

4. *In this volume …*

In this volume, we again combine semantic studies closely tied to the ancient lexicon of 'badness' with studies of conceptualizations of badness and the uses to which they were put in the context of different genres, contexts, and periods. The first five studies connect 'badness' with specific forms of literature or literary interpretation. In chapter 2, Kathryn Morgan studies the constraints on the representation of badness imposed by the genre of epinician poetry. The 'good' victors are singled out for praise because of their success, but there is no room for a corresponding form of blame. Given the vicissitudes of fortune and their impact on success or failure, blaming someone who may go on to be successful and 'good' would not be a safe strategy for the praise poet. Instead, the only safe targets for blame are those who themselves engage in 'blame speech'. 'Envy' resulting in 'bad' speaking is the (poetological) form that 'badness' takes in Pindar—the anti-value to praise itself.

In chapter 3, Jeremy Lefkowitz analyzes the biographical tradition of the fable poet Aesop, and in particular the role of Aesop's ugliness within that tradition. He argues that ugliness, which Greek culture generally acknowledges to be 'bad' and a sign of worthlessness, is turned into a riddling clue for the true value and inherent 'goodness' of Aesop. The correct interpretation of Aesop's appearance requires the same interpretive capacities that the genre of the fable does: there is a moral lesson to be drawn from the fact that one needs to see through

appearances, in this case Aesop's repulsive exterior, to find the value within. Aesop's ugliness is heuristic and didactic and in a sense points to the positive value of the fable itself. As in the previous chapter, an anti-value gets a poetological role. Lefkowitz connects his theme with Bentley's adverse judgments about authenticity and value of the *Life of Aesop* that go hand in hand with an indignant rejection of the suggestion that Aesop could have been as repulsive and ugly as the *Life* suggests.

In chapter 4, Deborah Steiner investigates the literary fortunes of the lowly dung-beetle, the most despised of insects. In a literary context, the *kantharos* functions on three levels. It becomes an emblem for scandalous *genres*, such as the fable, *iambos*, and old Comedy, with their inversion of regular values. Second, it evokes the *stylistic register* of mockery, invective and scatology. And finally, it can be used as a *trope* to subvert or debase symbols from the higher modes of discourse.

The next two chapters focus on ancient comedy. In chapter 5, Ian Storey provides an overview of the actual vocabulary employed when the comic poet makes his characters say 'bad things'. His chapter covers both the more colorful terms of insult, and a systematic account of the differential use of *kakos, ponêros, mokhthêros, aiskhros, panourgos*, and *miaros*. In chapter 6, Ralph Rosen poses the question of what makes poetry 'bad' in Aristophanes' *Frogs*. Aeschylus and Euripides both object to the other's style. Yet, although both Aeschylus and Euripides represent 'bad' characters in their plays, only Euripides is criticized for this. What makes Euripides especially vulnerable to the accusation of promoting actual badness in society? The author suggests that the answer lies in the presence or absence of a 'distancing effect' due to stylistic register, and hence the ease or difficulty of identification and *mimêsis*. The chapter explores Aristophanic views on the representation of badness and on the relation between authorial intention and the actual responses of the audience.

From literary 'badness' we then turn to an exploration of 'badness' in political rhetoric, more specifically to constructions of bad citizenship. Two chapters are devoted to this issue. In chapter 7, Matt Christ analyzes several stereotypes of bad citizenship in the construction of Athenian civic ideology. After having dealt with sykophants, draft-dodgers, and tax-evaders, he concentrates on a famous scene from Aristophanes' *Ecclesiazusae*, in which a cynical Athenian citizen demonstrates a rather unpatriotic reluctance to hand over his possessions to the newly ordained common pool. Christ insists on the ambiguities

of this fourth type of 'anti-citizen'. In this case, we may rather be dealing with a prototypical—and hence very recognizable—Athenian. Although he clearly violates expectations of reciprocity, his healthy and shrewd regard for self-interest may well have struck a chord as fitting the Athenian character. In spite of this one scene, the sources overwhelmingly, and reassuringly, construe 'bad citizens' as a deviant and easily identified minority.

Chapter 8 looks at a related, yet different aspect of 'bad citizenship': Nick Fisher concentrates on the abusive character stereotypes with which Athenians tried to disqualify their political adversaries. All these stereotypes comprise behaviors that compromise normative standards of reciprocity. Fisher distinguishes prostituting oneself or otherwise engaging in inappropriate sexual behavior; being a 'flatterer' or 'parasite'; and being a 'sykophant'. All three reproaches concern ill-defined behaviors and often several of these labels are attached to the same individual. Fisher sees a connection between these polemical trends and the explosion of democratic participation after the Cleisthenic reforms. He also points out that the vituperative use of these labels can be linked to legislative responses to the same set of perceived misbehaviors. As in the previous chapter, this particular 'badness' serves to off-set a civic ideal of reciprocity and orderly behavior.

The next three chapters are devoted to philosophy and investigate different aspects of Greek philosophical views on 'badness'. John Mulhern (chapter 9) analyzes Aristotle's use of *kakos* and its several compounds, a topic so far neglected by scholarship because 'badness' just seemed to be the privation or absence of 'good'. He argues that a useful framework for understanding the use of this concept could be the analytical framework developed in Aristotle's *Categories*. To Aristotle, goodness and badness are acquired through habituation. Categorial analysis reveals that the *kak-* compounds used by Aristotle exemplify different ways of being bad that affect categorially different doings and qualities. This is important for an understanding of the different ways in which people may succeed or fail: *kakia* turns out to be a homonym.

In chapter 10, Ed Sanders focuses on a particular bad characteristic singled out by Aristotle in his *Rhetoric*, *phthonos* 'envy'. In an analysis encompassing both *Ethics* and *Rhetoric*, he demonstrates the exceptional status of *phthonos* among the emotions, based on its 'badness' and its wrongful refusal to acknowledge other people's merits. *Phthonos* is unsuitable for use in persuasion, since it is an inappropriate emotion to

evoke in an audience, but it can be used to disqualify the character of one's opponent. The chapter shows how the *Rhetoric* allows a speaker to handle an emotion that could easily damage the speaker's own reputation.[46]

Rather than starting from an item in the lexicon, Jim Porter looks at an important philosophical anti-value: 'matter'. In chapter 11, he investigates when and how 'matter' fell into disgrace in Greek philosophical and aesthetic thought. Plato and Aristotle are decisive moments in the history of philosophical hostility to 'matter', but at the same time their philosophical positions are shown to be at odds with both an alternative historical tradition and the very materiality of beauty in Plato and Aristotle themselves. The alternative tradition is represented by the Presocratics, who created the conditions for the disgrace of matter by distinguishing matter and phenomena as categories of thought. They also developed a proto-aesthetic attitude towards these concepts which paved the way for a particular notion of the sublime, which Porter styles 'the material sublime'. Plato and Aristotle are shown not only to have explored beauty's 'formalism', but also to have reacted to beauty's material causes, i.e. its materialism. The tension between value ('form') and anti-value ('matter') was a highly productive one in Greek philosophy and aesthetics.

In the last seven chapters, we turn to the Roman world. In chapter 12, Elaine Fantham writes the history of the notion *malitia*, which features mostly in Roman comedy and in legal contexts. *Malitia* conveys the characteristic of deliberately willing or doing harm, and engaging in deceitfulness to do so. Trickery and associations with slave status are a very important part of its semantics. A special use of *malitia* occurs in the context of a too precise observance of the law, which results in patent injustice. The preponderance of the term in comedy may be responsible for its displacement in more serious contexts: where lawsuits and business contracts are at issue, the Romans came to prefer the notion of *dolus malus* to indicate bad faith and intentional harm-doing.

Chapter 13 explores yet another area of ancient life in which evaluative language played a role: scholarship. Cynthia Damon discusses the case of the infamous first-century-CE scholar Apion, who became the scholar everyone loved to hate. Nicknamed 'Drudge', Apion was depicted as a self-promoting, ignorant, shameless crowd-pleaser, spe-

[46] See also on chapters 2 and 15.

cializing in rhetorically pleasing etymologies, one-upmanship, miraculous stories, and half-baked magic, and a fervent Jew-hater. His incompetence and self-servingness implicitly off-set positive standards of scholarship. At the same time, both Apion's activities and the fierce criticism they elicited demonstrate the bitter competitiveness of ancient scholarship.

The ancient Latin (anti-)value, *superbia* is the focus of chapter 14. Yelena Baraz notices that for a very long time there seems to be no Latin term expressing a positive conception of 'pride'. Terms like *adrogantia, insolentia, fastus* and *superbia* all designate excessive pride or arrogance. However, this situation changes with Horace. From that time onwards, Augustan poets use *superbia* as a positive term for 'pride'. Yelena Baraz explains this by the political changes in this period: whereas *superbia* (exemplified by Tarquinius Superbus) is incompatible with republican values, the changing ideological landscape under Augustus, notably the very fact of the acceptance of a new *princeps* enables the transformation of the term from an anti-value to a positive one.

Christopher Van den Berg discusses another negative value term, *malignitas*, in yet another context, that of aesthetic evaluation (chapter 15).[47] The term is used relatively widely in contexts of perceived deficiency and failure, and is not always ethically colored. But when it is, it denotes a meanness or stinginess, a withholding of what one should rightfully give. The context of literary evaluation, which is central in this chapter, belongs in the sphere of social recognition and rewards: in such contexts, *malignitas* is used to indicate an unjustified refusal to accord recognition. In that sense, it effectively activates and promotes (through shaming) the desired positive value of generous recognition of merit: thus, employing *malignitas*-rhetoric often serves a corrective function. In the literary arena, *malignitas* is frequently used as a preemptive (defensive) strike against potential critics, or as a strategy of literary posturing. Christopher Van den Berg then applies these insights to an analysis of the use of *malignitas* in the *Dialogus de Oratoribus*, and points out that it indicates that contemporary rhetoric has unjustly not been given its due.

[47] There are obvious connections between this chapter and chapter 2 on 'bad-speaking' in Pindar—there opposed to the speech-act of praising; chapter 10 on *phthonos*—there discussed with a focus on its use in rhetoric; and chapter 12 on *malitia*, which is also derived from *mal-*, but with emphasis on comical low-life trickery.

Chapters 16, 17 and 18 turn to yet a different aspect of the rhetoric of anti-value: rather than focusing on a specific term or concept, they explore the use of negative *exempla*. In chapter 16, Florence Limburg argues that the detailed rendition of the obscene story of Hostius Quadra, who engaged in extravagant and shameless sexual practices, serves a serious philosophical goal and fits within Seneca's theory of philosophical *didaxis* and his use of negative moral *exempla*. The representation of vice is necessary as an apotreptic device to clear the way for the right philosophical disposition.

Chapter 17 focuses on the negative moral *exemplum* of the emperor Caligula, who takes on the role of an icon of vice in Seneca's work. Amanda Wilcox argues that, just as the concept of a 'wise man' ultimately has to be imagined, and then can help us to infer what goodness is, so we need a figure to embody vice in order to be able to form a correct concept of pure vice—not as an end in itself, however: since concept formation may proceed from opposites, the ultimate goal of the depiction of Caligula is to provide a grasp of virtue. This is what makes Caligula useful in philosophical teaching and development. Further, the very existence of this evil man proves nature's providence: Caligula's badness serves as the inspiration or occasion for the display of virtue in those he interacts with. Thus, ironically, Caligula serves the purpose of helping us get a grasp of goodness.

In chapter 18, finally, we encounter another monstrous emperor. Martijn Icks discusses the elements that go into the literary construction of a 'bad' emperor through an analysis of the literary portraits of Heliogabalus. Historiography, like philosophy, imparts its moral lessons through emblems, positive and negative. Heliogabalus' portraits are construed out of a variety of *topoi*: ethnic stereotyping (Heliogabalus is an 'oriental' emperor), effeminacy and luxuriousness. Thus, Heliogabalus becomes the prototype of everything a true, good, Roman emperor should *not* be: one last example of the persuasive use of the rhetoric of anti-values.

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CHAPTER TWO

GENERIC ETHICS AND THE PROBLEM OF BADNESS IN PINDAR

Kathryn Morgan

1. *Introduction: Why bother with Pindar?*

The Penn-Leiden conference, which focused on the articulation of concepts of badness in the ancient world, has provided an opportunity to reconsider a familiar theme: badness and the bad in Pindaric epinician. It might perhaps seem that this is a topic that needs no reconsideration. Not only has the search for authorial values largely been discredited, but even when such a search was in progress, Pindar was seen as a rather uninteresting player. For Bowra, Pindar was unconcerned with moral goodness or badness in the case of the gods, reserved about these qualities in the case of heroes (whose actions he might personally deprecate while never saying so too loudly), and although 'he has his own ideas on how men should behave … he is not a moral philosopher and does not trouble to explain his opinions, which he takes for granted, still less to analyze the nature of the "good man" as Simonides does to Scopas'.[1] In Fränkel's analysis, Pindar is an exponent of aristocratic values, according to which 'no distinction was made between fortune and merit … [m]isfortune brought disgrace … [h]e who was not "good", i.e. great and powerful, was automatically "bad"'. Simonides' Scopas poem (*PMG* 542) is again the foil for this unreflective outlook, first expressing, and then modifying the idea that 'it is not possible for a man not to be bad, whom resourceless misfortune seizes, for every man is good when he fares well and bad if he fares badly'.[2]

[1] Bowra 1964, 62, 67–88, quote at 76–77.

[2] Fränkel [1962]/1975, 307, with n. 8 making the connection to Pindar. As Hutchinson 2001, 292 points out, the ethics of the piece and its abstraction make it an unsuitable candidate for occasional praise poetry.

Not only the question of badness, then, but the poet himself and his oeuvre (in this area) run the risk of appearing merely conventional. Yet the contrast between Pindar and Simonides may be overdrawn. Matthew Dickie has shown how the famous Scopas poem shares many epinician motifs familiar from Pindar and Bacchylides, and argues that all three poets share a pessimistic view of the human condition based on vicissitude. On this reading, Simonides is no radical theorist of a new kind of *aretê*, but a practiced manipulator of topoi who takes the discussion of *aretê* to a more sophisticated level.[3] Of course, this is no argument for the originality of Pindar, but it does perhaps indicate that we are too quick in the attribution of radical and conservative agendas to ancient poets. If scholarship on Pindar has taught us anything in recent decades, it is that investigation of convention may illuminate the way the symbolic grammar of Pindaric epinician interacts with the social context of his poetry. It may be true that 'Pindar … is no theologian'[4] and no theoretician of ethics but one thing he does theorize is poetics. It is here that we may look for clues to understand the way the vocabulary and concepts of 'badness' are deployed in his poetry.

In the pages that follow I propose to explore the rubric of 'badness' in terms of some familiar features of the genre of Pindaric epinician. In particular, I wish to examine the constraints this genre puts on the construction of badness. Praise poetry is obviously meant to praise, as the victor emerges from a dark background to stand in Pindar's famous god-given gleam (*P.* 8.96–97). As many have stated, Pindar's task is to negotiate the problem of praise in such a way that the victor gets his due, while the audience of citizens, friends, and gods is not irritated by the amount of praise heaped on one man.[5] The threat to the task is potential envy on the part of the audience (of both deeds and poetry). These are the people who speak 'bad'. How does this generic picture connect with broader questions of the good and the bad? I suggest that Pindaric epinician presents a deliberately restricted vision of the bad, predicated by the awareness of vicissitude. Focus on standards of judgment and their function in both poetic and civic speech means that we are presented with a world where the struggle of the good and the bad plays itself out at the level of speech, and where the proper functioning of human society is based upon what we might

[3] Dickie 1978.

[4] Fränkel [1962]/1975, 478.

[5] For a recent treatment, see Mackie 2003, 9–37.

call epinician virtue. I shall begin by exploring the extent to which Pindar can be assimilated to aristocratic ethics as expressed in the poetry of Theognis (section 2). Section 3 will examine the causes and characterization of bad situations, situations that often turn on errors of judgment. Finally, I shall address the category of bad speech and its poetic and civic implications (section 4). Bad speech acts are reliably bad acts. Pindar's frequent concern with the ethics of the genre and his duty to praise spills over into his treatment of an orderly and virtuous society.

2. *Pindar, Theognis, and the aristocratic ethic*

I would like to approach Pindar by way of Theognis, since Theognidian elegy helps to illustrate the stresses placed on the vocabulary of *kakia* by developments in the archaic and early classical period. The dating and coherence of the Theognidian corpus is a subject of a lively scholarly debate, in which it is, thankfully, unnecessary for present purposes to intervene. I write on the assumption that the corpus as we have it is a hybrid dating back in its core portion to at least the sixth century BCE.[6] Central to the interests of the corpus is class struggle in archaic Megara, a struggle that is reflected in the pervasive language of the 'good' (*agathos/esthlos*) and the 'bad' (*kakos/deilos*). There are many bad people in Theognis, and the voice of the poet is always warning his addressee against them. Cyrnus is not to address the 'bad' (*kakois*, 31). When the leaders of the city become hybristic, they destroy the demos and give judgments in favor of the unjust for the sake of private gain (*kerdos*), and this gain comes at the cost of badness for the demos (*dêmosiôi sun kakôi*), leading to stasis and monarchy (41–52). As Nagy has pointed out, these reflections are presented in universalizing terms, so that it may be difficult to tell whether the leaders who have fallen into badness (*kakotêta*) are members of the old elite or represent a movement

[6] For Nagy 1985, 33 the figure of Theognis is a 'cumulative synthesis of Megarian poetic traditions'. Kurke 1999, 28 sees the corpus as a reflection of a 'period of contestation and negotiation' between 'middling' and elitist ideologies. Lane Fox 2000, 37–40 has argued, on the contrary (and also against M.L. West), that the historical references in the corpus are best assigned to the years between ca. 600–ca. 560 BCE. For further arguments against an early dating, and a willingness to envision a date in the late sixth century, see Hubbard 2007, 195–198.

towards democracy.[7] The fundamental study of this vocabulary is that of Giovanni Cerri, who demonstrated how these adjectives express judgments of both value and social standing, inextricably entwined. Badness is both class and ethics based. The poet identifies a 'good' man as one who is just (143–144), but it is also clear that the vocabulary of the 'good' and the 'bad' (*agathoi* and *kakoi*) correlates with social class. The good were the aristocracy who possessed good breeding and hereditary wealth, while the bad (or 'base') were those outside this social group. The adjectives are thus moral qualifiers founded on class and the social presuppositions of aristocratic class ideology.[8]

As Cerri himself notes, this merging of the ethical and the social is the product of a situation in which aristocratic elites are imperiled.[9] Although Cerri may be correct to conclude that the vocabulary of goodness and badness is generally consistent, what emerges from a reading of the corpus is that systems of classification are under threat (54–60):[10]

> Those who formerly knew neither judgments nor laws
> But used to wear out goatskins on their sides,
> And used to graze like deer outside the city
> Are in fact now the good, son of Polypaos; those who were formerly
>   good
> Are now base. Who could bear to look upon these things?
> They deceive each other as they laugh at each other;
> They know the minds neither of the good nor the bad.

> οἳ πρόσθ᾽ οὔτε δίκας ἤιδεσαν οὔτε νόμους,
> ἀλλ᾽ ἀμφὶ πλευραῖσι δορὰς αἰγῶν κατέτριβον,
>   ἔξω δ᾽ ὥστ᾽ ἔλαφοι τῆσδ᾽ ἐνέμοντο πόλεος.
> καὶ νῦν εἰσ᾽ ἀγαθοί, Πολυπαΐδη· οἱ δὲ πρὶν ἐσθλοὶ
>   νῦν δειλοί. τίς κεν ταῦτ᾽ ἀνέχοιτ᾽ ἐσορῶν;
> ἀλλήλους δ᾽ ἀπατῶσιν ἐπ᾽ ἀλλήλοισι γελῶντες,
>   οὔτε κακῶν γνώμας εἰδότες οὔτ᾽ ἀγαθῶν.

This passage reflects the collapse of an easy equivalence of the elite and the 'good'. The 'formerly good' have been displaced by the new 'good' and are therefore now 'base'.[11] Political vicissitude results in changed labels.

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[7] Nagy 1985, 42–43.
[8] Cerri 1968, 11, 16–18.
[9] Cerri 1968, 23.
[10] Unless otherwise stated all translations are my own.
[11] Detailed analysis at Kurke 1989.

We must add to this mix the unpredictability of the gods and fortune and the fallibility of human knowledge (152–167), where the *daimôn* can make a man rich or poor, good or bad (165–166) and badness is a pragmatic description of life circumstances. We are told also that what seems bad can turn out to be good (161). It is possible for a *kakos* to be rich and an *agathos* to be poor, although this is envisioned as a perversion. Yet there is a sense in which the good stay good (or struggle to do so) no matter what, and the reverse (314–321):

> Many bad men are wealthy, and good men are poor,
> But we will not exchange wealth for excellence with these men,
> Since the one is stable always,
> But different men have money at different times.
> Cyrnus, a good man has a mind that is always stable,
> And he dares both when he is among good and when he is among bad men.
> But if god grants livelihood and wealth to a bad man
> He is unable to restrain his badness because of his folly.

> Πολλοί τοι πλουτοῦσι κακοί, ἀγαθοὶ δὲ πένονται,
> ἀλλ' ἡμεῖς τούτοισ' οὐ διαμειψόμεθα
> τῆς ἀρετῆς τὸν πλοῦτον, ἐπεὶ τὸ μὲν ἔμπεδον αἰεί,
> χρήματα δ' ἀνθρώπων ἄλλοτε ἄλλος ἔχει.
> Κύρν', ἀγαθὸς μὲν ἀνὴρ γνώμην ἔχει ἔμπεδον αἰεί,
> τολμᾷ δ' ἔν τε κακοῖς κείμενος ἔν τ' ἀγαθοῖς.
> εἰ δὲ θεὸς κακῷ ἀνδρὶ βίον καὶ πλοῦτον ὀπάσσῃ,
> ἀφραίνων κακίην οὐ δύναται κατέχειν.

Lines 314–317 here are identical to Solon fr. 15 W, and the point, as Rosivach notes with regard to the Solon passage, and as is especially clear in the Theognidian context, is not that even poor people may be virtuous, but that the natural order of things has been upset when *kakoi* become wealthy.[12] Theognis' city, then (and his tradition?), is in a state of flux. The good are the hereditary aristocracy who used to rule. The bad are aspirants to that rule, and if they achieve it, they will be labeled good. But this would be a travesty, since they do not know how to rule, they pursue private gain, and are unjust, while Theognis' party, is, of course just. It is money that enables this transformation from bad to good, but it is more problematic to gain and exercise the

[12] Rosivach 1992, 155–156. Dickie 1978, 25–26 traces the motif of remaining good even in misfortune back to *Odyssey* 6.187–190, but although the *Odyssey* passage stresses vicissitude and endurance, it does not focus on the persistence of good qualities.

values associated with status. So we have the paradox that good fortune can make someone 'good' but not good, while bad fortune can afflict the good who will struggle to stay good while being technically bad. Ethics, politics, fortune, and wealth interact to create a situation where standards of value are unclear.

What happens when we change our focus from factional politics in Megara to the world of epinician poetry? A view that sees Pindar as the last great exponent of the aristocratic ethic might suggest that categories are similar. Certainly, we get versions of the same idea that no one is good or bad, rich or poor, without the favor of the gods (*O.* 9.28—people become *agathos* or *sophos* in accordance with the *daimôn*, cf. Theognis 164–167). This coheres with multiple statements about inherited excellence and noble families. So we might reconstruct an entrenched aristocracy who are the *agathoi*, the 'good', contrasted by carpers, opponents, and slanderers, who are the bad. Importantly, we also see that, to a great extent, value is judged by success, although vicissitude prevents us from great security in our assessments ('Days to come are the wisest witnesses', *O.* 1.32–34). For Cerri, Pindar and Theognis express the identical ethic, but while Theognis is at least aware of historical evolution, Pindar composes as if in a 'dreamlike state of unawareness, totally permeated by ancient ideals'.[13] It would be unhelpful to deny that Theognis and Pindar share many similarities, including the ethical shading given to the usage of *agathos*, but the differences between them should not be underestimated.[14] A major difference is that Pindar fails to elaborate and theorize the social and moral underpinnings of the bad in the same way as Theognis. One searches with difficulty for a systematic use of *kakos* vocabulary to stigmatize sinners, the base, and the disapproved in Pindar (or for that matter, in Bacchylides). One might respond that this is because Pindar is a praise poet whose genre forbids him to linger over base people and actions. Yet one might also play the generic card in a different way: the realities of the genre discourage such elaboration. Like Theognis, Pindar composes in a context where values are increasingly uncertain and where he must fight to establish his own. He is, however, far from

[13] Cerri 1968, 31, 'quasi immerso in un'incoscienza onirica, tutto pervaso dagli antichi ideali'.

[14] Many of Cerri's examples of the convergence between the Theognidian and Pindaric nobleman (1968, 12–17) are taken from Pindaric odes written for Sicilian tyrants; this should give us pause.

existing in a dreamlike state of unawareness. We can best appreciate his approach not in the nuances of his analysis of what it takes to be good, but in the careful restraint of his presentation of what it means to be bad.

3. *Errors in judgment and the importance of success*

Let us, then, consider the causes of and reactions to bad situations in Pindar. A major category of bad deeds and bad people consists of those who have made the mistake of thinking that they can offend the gods and get away with it. Here *kakos* vocabulary labels an unhappy or undesirable event. Thus in *Pythian* 2, Ixion's attempt to rape Hera provokes the remark that perverted sexual liaisons cast one into 'collected badness' (ἐς κακότατ' ἀθρόαν, 35), or as we might say, a heap of trouble. When in *Pythian* 3 Pindar discusses the unhappy end of Coronis (who was unfaithful to Apollo although she carried his child and was subsequently killed by Artemis) he states that a *daimôn* of a different sort subdued her, having turned her to *kakon* (35). Pindar stresses that such attempts are foolish and inevitably unsuccessful (though we do perhaps miss a sense of what we might call moral outrage). Coronis, because of a 'mental error made light of the anger of the gods', but 'did not elude the watching god' (*P.* 3.12–13, 27). Ixion was 'an ignorant man pursuing a sweet falsity' (*P.* 2.37). Tantalus' similar mistake in *O.* 1, stealing nectar and ambrosia from the gods, brings the remark that 'if a man thinks he can hide his deeds from the gods, he is mistaken' (64). These are, of course, the great sinners of Pindar's odes for Hieron, tyrant of Syracuse, where the point is that those who are blessed with divine favor at a more than human level are in the greatest danger of falling to overwhelming ruin. A major source of evil fates is thus the making of a category mistake: not just offending a god, but thinking that one could deceive them. The error is an intellectual one.

Category errors also wreak havoc at the level of mortal interaction. The unfortunate end of King Augeas of Elis is caused partly because he cheats his guests, but more importantly because that guest was Heracles: 'strife against those who are better/stronger is impossible to put aside. So that man at the end, because of his lack of counsel, met with capture and did not escape sheer death' (*O.* 10.39–42). Or again in *Nemean* 10, Idas and Lynceus, angered about a cattle raid, dare to engage in battle with the Dioskouroi. Castor is fatally wounded, but

Polydeuces kills Lynceus, while Zeus kills Idas with a thunderbolt: 'strife against those who are better/stronger is difficult for men to encounter' (72). The gnomic stress is again on the category mistake: you will simply lose if you attack Heracles or the Dioskouroi—and note that Idas and Lynceus are killed by Zeus and his son Polydeuces, rather than by the Dioskouroi as a pair. All this is unproblematic enough. Attacks against the gods or those whom we know in retrospect to be demigods are both impious and doomed.

We may well ask, however, how this helps us come to grips with *kakotês* in the early fifth century. We may all make a note to ourselves to avoid insulting gods or demigods, but this leaves a wide field. The problem, moreover, is compounded because our knowledge of who is stronger, or better, can only be approximate in prospect, though accurate enough in retrospect. Augeas, Idas, and Lynceus, for example, do not do anything that would have seemed obviously 'bad' at the time—they have a quarrel about cattle and attempt to take the advantage. Many mythological characters in Pindar do worse things and have happy endings. Peleus, for example, murdered his brother but is later exemplary for his piety and has a wedding attended by the gods. Even if we were to put descendants of Zeus in a special category, this is hardly helpful for the early classical period.

There is a gap between the exemplary bad deeds mentioned above and the application of the lesson exemplified. This is, I argue, largely a function of the genre itself. Pindar was a writer of commissioned poetry, and he did not restrict himself to writing only for a certain class of people, like the Theognidian *agathoi*. Recent Pindaric criticism has retreated from the position that the poet accepted commissions only from like-minded aristocrats. Even if we do not accept Thomas Hubbard's contention that Pindar's Aeginetan patrons were a newly rich mercantile elite, it remains true, as Simon Hornblower points out, that the poet wrote for patrons from a variety of political backgrounds and 'not just for "aristocrats" if by that is meant something marginal or superannuated'.[15] The clearest category of bad situations (foolish rivalry with the divine) is one that could be applied only with difficulty to contemporary patrons from whatever walk of life, although the moral of learning one's limits is generally valid. Only tyrants might be said

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[15] Hubbard 2001; Hornblower 2004, 211–215 on Hubbard and the mercantile elite of Aigina; 248–258 on Athens; quote on 263.

to be in a situation where the dangers showcased in the exempla are pressing, and tyrants exist in a world of superlatives and individual preeminence different from that of aristocratic community and more moderate civic values. The characterizations of badness we have looked at are rhetorically effective but not informative as a general standard.

What Pindar's patrons have in common is success. This makes characterizing them as in some sense 'good' easy enough. We have already glanced at the tradition that acknowledged the importance of fortune and the gods in raising a man to the pinnacle of success. We have also seen how, at the mythological level of Pindar's poetry, success or failure in an encounter with a hero helps form value judgments. Functionally speaking, if one is fortunate enough to win an athletic competition, one is good. It would be perfectly possible for an athlete who was not an hereditary aristocrat to win a victory, and perfectly possible for Pindar to celebrate him in song. This possibility makes it difficult for Pindar to deploy the aristocratic polarity of the 'good' vs. the 'bad' in a restricted social sense. Indeed, he seems anxious to avoid such terminology when he speaks of different kinds of citizens and constitutions in *Pythian* 2. The polarity there is between a 'deceitful citizen' and 'the good' (*P.* 2.81–82), and later the poet remarks that a 'straight-tongued' man prospers whether government is by a 'boisterous host' a tyranny, or the wise (86–88).[16]

The opening of Bacchylides' fourteenth epinician keeps the older polarity between the *kakos* and the *esthlos*, but attempts to soften the absolutist line (1–11):

> The best thing is to have a good allotment from god.
> Fortune that has come, ill to bear,
> destroys a good man (*esthlon*),
> and makes even a base man (*kakon*) visible on high,
> when it is prosperous.
> Different men have different kinds of honor;
> The excellences of men are countless, but one
> Stands out from all others
> He who steers what is at hand with a just mind.[17]

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[16] Cf. Hornblower 2004, 255, who suspects that a distinction between aristocracy and the others is expressed by the opposition between *agathoi* and *astoi*.

[17] The steering metaphor is interesting here, since the ship of state metaphor was relatively common in archaic elegy and lyric. In these lines, however, what is steered is not a *polis*, but the task at hand. One gains the impression of a horizon purposely lowered from state to individual.

Εὖ μὲν εἱμάρθαι παρὰ δαίμ[ονος ἀν]θρώ-
ποις ἄριστον·
[σ]υμφορὰ δ' ἐσθλόν ⟨τ'⟩ ἀμαλδύ-
[νει β]αρύτλ[α]τος μολοῦσα
[καὶ τ]ὸν κακ[ὸν] ὑψιφανῆ
τεύ[χει κ]ατορθωθεῖσα· τι-
μὰν [δ' ἄλ]λος ἀλλοίαν ἔχει·
[μυρί]αι δ' ἀνδρῶν ἀρε[ταί,] μία δ' ἐ[κ πα-]
[σᾶ]ν πρόκειται,
[ὃς τὰ] πὰρ χειρὸς κυβέρνα-
[σεν δι]καίαισι φρένεσσιν.

These lines encapsulate as a foil one important strand of our discussion so far: the mutability of fortune that elevates even the *kakos* and can wipe out the good (cf. Theognis 159–170). The conclusion, expressed as a summary priamel, seems at first to throw up its hands in the face of this instability: if different men achieve different kinds of honor, who can judge which is best? Yet justice reappears as a criterion, and as a relative one: whatever one's position, just conduct creates preeminence (just as the straight speaker prospers in *Pythian* 2 above).[18]

Pindar does not appeal to the 'good' vs. 'bad' polarity in terms familiar from earlier poets, whatever his personal aristocratic sympathies may or may not have been, and Bacchylides too is keen to supersede it. The particular social and political resonances of the polarity make it unsuitable for epinician poetry simply because it is so fraught. Moreover, victory at the games must have exemplified the truth that goodness and badness did not necessarily correlate with social class (although when it did Pindar loved to refer to the innate excellence and superiority of the family involved). Nor will they have correlated with moral excellence. So when Pindar presents 'bad' acts, they are egregious acts against gods and safely insulated from any immediate present resonance. Acts by humans against humans and heroes are not measured by any standard of goodness or badness, but retrospectively, by success or failure in an endeavor. Just so, a victor at the games may in fact have done things in his past that would not bear examination, but they are irrelevant in light of the success he has achieved in the contest. Of course, the poet makes every effort to portray his victor as just, hospitable, and so on, but Pindar is reticent when it comes to contemporary situations that one might characterize as bad. This is necessary

[18] Dickie 1978, 30 rightly compares Simonides 542 *PMG* as another instance of the praising of situational *aretê*.

when one does not know what the next client will bring to the table. For the dyspeptic Theognidian poet, contemporary success is no criterion, but for Pindar it must be.

A brief glance at two episodes, that of Peleus in *Nemean* 5 and Clytaemnestra in *Pythian* 11 illustrates the difficulties. In the famous hush passage in *Nemean* 5 (14–18), Pindar alludes to, but refuses to tell in detail, the story of how Peleus murdered his brother Phocus and was forced into exile: 'I am ashamed to tell a great deed not risked justly … I shall stop. Not every truth is more profitable for revealing its face accurately, and silence is often wisest for a man to ponder'. The wording here is tentative, and poetic procedure is discussed in terms of a calculus of tact and profit. One notes the posture of embarrassment Pindar adopts in order to display his tact, and his refusal to blame. On the one hand, this ostentatious refusal fits well with the job of a praise poet to keep away from blame, but it also acknowledges that subsequent events vindicated the hero: Peleus was justified by receiving a divine prize (the hand of Thetis) as a reward for his piety and by being praised in divine song (*N.* 5.25–26). A model of tact indeed, since we are assured that prior deeds, however embarrassing (not *bad* as such, but risked unjustly), can be covered over in silence as long as later achievements can cast a retrospective shadow.[19] The end rereads the beginning. In *Pythian* 11, Clytaemnestra's murder of Agamemnon and her infidelity receive a similar restrained treatment. She is, to be sure, a 'pitiless woman' (22), but the poet is (again ostentatiously) unsure about her motive: the death of Iphigenia, or her affair with Aegisthus? The second option is treated at greater length, and is evidently to be preferred. Infidelity is 'a most hateful fault for young wives and impossible to hide from other people's tongues. The townsmen are bad speakers (*kakologoi*), for prosperity involves no less envy (*phthonon*)' (25–29). I shall return to this passage below, but at present I stress merely Pindar's indeterminacy and his focus on the problematic outcome when people talk about the questionable deeds of the great. In contrast to Pindar's poetic 'shame' in speaking of Peleus, the people of Amyclae gossip about Clytaemnestra, and the die is cast. Speech, poetic and otherwise, clearly has a crucial role to play in evaluating human action for good and bad, and determining the rubric under which it is consid-

[19] Pratt 1993, 117–118 interprets the role of time in epinician somewhat differently: time offers the chance to test a man's true character. My stress is rather on the opportunities for revision offered by time (cf. Mackie 2003, 72–73).

ered. Pindaric hesitancy with regard to condemnation is of a piece with his position as a composer of commissioned poetry.

If success is a preeminent value criterion, then it makes judgment about badness and anti-value difficult, as we have seen. Nor would one necessarily want to characterize losers as base or worthless, although they have clearly been found wanting in terms of *aretê* and cannot look forward to a cheerful homecoming (*P.* 8.81–87).[20] Even the most glorious victor may have had past defeats or misfortunes, given the vicissitudes of existence. Where else may we look for negative judgments? Pindar himself indicates that such judgments are a theoretical aspect of his poetry. At *N.* 8.39, an ode for an Aeginetan victor, Pindar comments that some pray for gold and land, but he wants to please his townsmen, 'praising what is praiseworthy, but sowing blame (*momphan*) on sinners'. Although in this ode, he does blame, implicitly, Odysseus, for winning a contest he ought to have lost, and although he echoes this criticism in *Nemean* 7, where he deprecates Homer's championing of Odysseus (*N.* 7.20ff.), it is seldom that he 'sows blame on sinners' with any specificity. One solution to this problem is to equate blame or negative judgments with silence. As Marcel Detienne has pointed out, 'While in certain traditions blame is malevolent speech or positive criticism, it can also be defined as a lack of praise'.[21] Thus refusing to speak about someone might in fact be an expression of blame. The job of the epinician poet is to praise, not to blame explicitly (like Archilochus—see below), and Sylvia Montiglio has argued that Pindar's silences are in part an expression of his poetics of the ideal, a poetics that exercises careful discrimination in its choice of subject.[22] Pindar would be sowing blame merely by refusing to speak, and specificity would not be necessary.

Yet as Montiglio herself recognizes, this solution does not do full justice to the complexity of Pindar's poetics.[23] As we have seen, silence in the break-off passage of *Nemean* 5 is explicitly presented as a function of tact, and while numerous passages in Pindar underline the necessity that a glorious achievement not be covered over in silence, we need

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[20] In this ode the thoughts of the victorious wrestler towards his opponents as he hurtles down on them from above are described as *kaka* (*P.* 8.82). The directionality of the language here is suggestive. The *kaka* thoughts of the victor are those that involve keeping someone low, just as he himself is physically lofty (as he pins his opponent beneath him), and as victors in general are conceived as existing 'on high' (cf. *O.* 1.115).

[21] Detienne [1967]/1996, 47.

[22] Montiglio 2000, 90–91.

[23] For her complementary 'poetics of cautiousness' see Montiglio 2000, 108–109.

not draw the inference that such silence would imply a negative value judgment. Great deeds may be forgotten if not celebrated in song, but this is not an attribution of fault.[24] As we have seen, Pindar gives negative judgment a place in his poetics, although he also castigates those who blame.[25] In an oft-cited passage, Gregory Nagy remarks that 'blame is inimical to praise in praise poetry only if it is the blame of the noble',[26] and an ancestral job of the Indo-European poet was surely to balance praise and blame in the community.[27] We need not, then, conclude that Pindar's judgments of 'badness' in human affairs are expressed through omission. Silence occupies a mediating position and may express either blame or tact; its function is not predetermined. The problem of Pindar's reticence remains, and his audiences are faced with the challenge of finding a more successful framework in which to discern and assess his judgments of badness. It should not, perhaps, surprise us that this framework will be poetological. Pindar identifies another area for the operation of badness based on shared poetic and communal values. His judgments here are both explicit and, in their way, theoretical. I refer to the poet's discussions of bad talk.

4. *Bad talking and epinician virtue*

A major concentration of *kakos* vocabulary in Pindar connects badness with certain types of speech. Given the nature of the epinician genre, discussed above, and in the absence of clear criteria that would aid in value judgments about deeds, Pindar shifts the stage of the action to words. A certain kind of speech is bad, and Pindar talks about it with some frequency: the language of envy and slander that constantly threatens the fortunate and those with extraordinary achievements. A survey of the passages where Pindar talks about bad speech will show how the proper functioning of human society is based upon what one might call epinician virtue: rightful praise and verbal tact. We will see

[24] *N.* 9.6–7; *N.* 7.11–16.

[25] Mackie 2003, 20 n. 42 expresses this tension well: 'Just how far the epinician poet construes his responsibility as far as the dissemination of blame goes is a more tricky matter than his account of his responsibilities regarding praise. Sometimes he says that it is his job to "blame the blameworthy"; at other times he seems to say that any blame is to be avoided'.

[26] Nagy 1979, 224.

[27] Mackie 2003, 20–21; cf. Detienne [1967]/1996, 45–48, Nagy 1979, 222.

a continuum between a generalized human condition of blindness and resentment, the expression and manipulation of these failings through civic and communal speech (whether in groups or through the agency of an individual speaker), and finally their instantiation or rejection in poetic discourse.[28]

In the famous 'hush-passage' of *Olympian* 1, the poet refuses to believe the tradition that any one of the gods could have been greedy and have eaten a choice morsel of the stew containing young Pelops prepared by his father Tantalus. He will not continue with the story, since 'profitlessness is the lot of evil speakers' (*kakagorous*, 53). As in *Nemean* 5, it is interesting that poetic choice is presented under the rubric of tact and appropriateness (and the ensuing profit or lack of the same).[29] Moralizing takes the form of 'it would be unprofitable to call a god a glutton and so I shall not'. We need not go so far as to say that it is only appropriateness that is a poetic concern (when it suits him Pindar can stress divine omniscience, as he does a few lines later), but it is a primary filter through which we experience and evaluate the narrative. The lying story of cannibalism was generated, we learn, by 'jealous neighbors' speaking secretly (47), and Pindar thus anchors the creation of poetic tradition in common speech. Poetic tradition crystallizes the report of men, but such a report has an immediate political consequence (slanderous speech about the great) even before the poet starts his work. The passage presents a nexus of greed, profit, and evil speech, and its themes continue even into Pindar's revised version of the sin of Tantalus. In this version (54–64) Tantalus steals food—nectar and ambrosia—from the table of his divine hosts, a crime again connected with greed, as also with the breakdown of the proper distinctions between gods and mortals, as Tantalus attempts to pass on the food of the gods to his human drinking partners.[30]

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[28] Contrast Most 1985, 152, who concludes that mortal blindness and poetic deception point in two different directions, towards production on one side and reception on the other. My interest, however is in showing that the production of poetry depends first on an act of reception of tradition, and that the audience of a poet is itself the producer of words that can become traditional.

[29] Pratt 1993, 125–126; Mackie 2003, 73–75.

[30] For a wide-ranging and perceptive analysis of the connection of greed with abuse and the topoi of iambic poetry in terms of *Olympian* 1, see Steiner 2002 (especially 298–305). Cf. also Mackie 2003, 25. It is perhaps not without significance that by the late fifth century, the crime of Tantalus was defined (imprecisely) by Euripides as having a 'licentious tongue' (ἀκόλαστον … γλῶσσαν *Or.* 10) although he had the honor of sharing a table with the gods. Although the representation of Tantalus in the

A more comprehensive picture of the relationship between poetry, mythological sinners, standards of judgment, and political life emerges from *Pythian* 2. Here the human world is contrasted with and justified by the divine machinery that governs human existence. The poet emphasizes the effectiveness of divine thought and action, whereas mortal goals and actions can be misjudged and deprived of effect. Because the mortal realm is characterized by uncertainty, we must maintain a flexible standard of judgment, since our intuitions about deserved success and failure can only be validated by the gods. This has implications for mortal speech, poetic and otherwise: the only safe object of blame is blame itself.

After opening invocations to the victor and his city, Pindar moves to the cautionary tale of Ixion, and then at lines 49–56 makes a transition to the problem of blame poetry through a meditation on the irresistibility of divine power. Pindar explicitly sets his own generic practice in opposition to the iambic poetry of Archilochus (*P.* 2.49–56):

> God accomplishes every purpose in accordance with his hopes.
> God, who overtakes even the winged eagle and outstrips the dolphin in the sea, and bows down some mortal who is lofty-minded,
> but to others gives ageless fame.
> But I must flee the persistent bite of bad speaking,
> for although I am far away, I have seen
> the blame poet Archilochus fattening himself on heavy-speaking hatreds,
> for the most part in helplessness.
> Fated wealth is the best part of wisdom.

> θεὸς ἅπαν ἐπὶ ἐλπίδεσσι τέκμαρ ἀνύεται,
> θεός, ὃ καὶ πτερόεντ' αἰετὸν κίχε, καὶ θαλασ-
> σαῖον παραμείβεται
> δελφῖνα, καὶ ὑψιφρόνων τιν' ἔκαμψε βροτῶν,
> ἑτέροισι δὲ κῦδος ἀγήραον παρέδωκ'· ἐμὲ δὲ χρεὼν
> φεύγειν δάκος ἀδινὸν κακαγοριᾶν.
> εἶδον γὰρ ἑκὰς ἐὼν τὰ πόλλ' ἐν ἀμαχανίᾳ
> ψογερὸν Ἀρχίλοχον βαρυλόγοις ἔχθεσιν
> πιαινόμενον· τὸ πλουτεῖν δὲ σὺν τύχᾳ
> πότμου σοφίας ἄριστον.

Orestes may probably, as Willink 1983, 31 argues, have been influenced by contemporary stereotypes of sophistic intellectual impiety, the close juxtaposition in four consecutive lines of Pindar's refusal to speak ill of the gods, his comment that profitlessness is the lot of evil-speakers, and the sad statement that the gods had honored Tantalus above all others suggests that even in Pindar's time, Tantalus' tongue may have run away with him.

Bad speaking (*kakagorian*) is juxtaposed with greed (Archilochus fattens himself) and failure.[31] The 'helplessness' of the iambic poet may be connected both with material and poetic failure. Archilochus' *amakhania* corresponds to the *akerdeia* ('profitlessness') that is the lot of bad-speakers in *Olympian* 1.[32] At one level the profit and loss should be financial: it is the praise singer who will receive commissions. Yet as Leslie Kurke points out, *kerdos* for Pindar is positive when it is metaphorical; the poet desires the credit of a good reputation,[33] as well as an abundance of poetic inventiveness (*eumakhania*: *I.* 4.20).[34] The iambic poet, however, will never be full no matter how much he stuffs himself. He will be poor and his subject matter will be constrained.[35] The poverty of blame poetry is explicitly contrasted with the effectiveness of divine action.

Pindar distances himself from the language of blame in spite of having presented Ixion as a negative paradigm at some length in the preceding verses. Ixion had attempted to rape Hera, had instead, through the wiles of Zeus, impregnated a cloud and produced, at a generation's remove, the race of centaurs. His punishment (being bound to an eternally revolving wheel) requites two crimes: the attempted rape and his deceitful murder of a family member (*P.* 2.31–32)—a crime from which tradition said Zeus had purified him. Notably, the crime performed in the mortal sphere is not punished (and given Zeus's purification may even have been forgiven) until Ixion offends against the majesty of the gods: another proof that actions in the mortal sphere may exist in moral abeyance until they impinge upon the divine sphere. Ixion's actions on Olympus are deprived of effect: he fashions the *iunx* that will be the instrument of his own punishment and he has intercourse with a mere semblance of the goddess. Like Archilochus, he pursues goals that turn out to be empty and self-destructive, and his fate is a physical instantiation of helplessness, with the ironic twist that he is doomed to repeat

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[31] For an investigation of greed in this passage in terms of the tropes of iambic poetry, see Brown 2006.

[32] Mackie 2003, 13.

[33] Kurke 1991, 228–239.

[34] Gentili *et al.* 1995, 386 settle on 'material poverty' as the sense of εὐμαχανία here, both because of ancient anecdotes concerning the poverty of Archilochus, and in order to establish a strong correlation between praise and wealth on the one hand, as opposed to blame and poverty on the other. This correlation may be present, but nothing prevents further metaphorical resonance, and such resonance is demanded by the larger context of the poem (Miller 1981, 139–140; Most 1985, 90; Steiner 2002, 305).

[35] Bulman 1992, 12–13.

eternally the injunction to be grateful to one's benefactor (*P.* 2.21–24). We should note how this punishment foregrounds the role of speech: as a result of his sinful actions against the divine Ixion is forced to say the right thing forever. He is a kind of animated generic template—no wonder that Pindar's choice is for kindly words. This story of *hubris* rebuked thus foreshadows elements of the critique of Archilochus that follows. In both cases Pindar focuses on the results of the counterproductive action: *kakotata* (badness) for Ixion and *amakhania* (helplessness) for Archilochus. Both are the result of greed, and they show that the traits showcased in epinician virtue and vice have a significance that extends well beyond generic protocols.

The gnomic passage, quoted above, that intervenes between the narrative of Ixion and the vignette of Archilochus shows again how the actions of the gods exist in a different order of reality, one where lack of resource is not in question. The gods give success or failure as they please (the latter mostly to lofty thinkers like Ixion). There is no gap between hope and accomplishment for them as there was for Ixion, and unlike Archilochus, or Pindar for that matter, they can praise or blame with impunity, since, as the gnomic passage makes clear, their hopes and utterances are performative.[36] When they give 'ageless fame' to someone they give him both the achievement itself and its survival in tradition. Pindaric praise is always provisional, a matter of pious hope that the praise and the deservedness in the eyes of the gods that led to the praise, will continue (both the poet and the victor must do their part). Blame must be avoided since it forestalls the possibility of recuperation and since it is so often colored with personal hatred and generated by envy. Pindar flees the bite of 'bad-speaking', and this means, I think, that he must not be a biter himself, tainted by hatred and envy, and that he wants to avoid being the object of bad speech, either by uttering excessive praise or by deserving blame through speaking blame when it is undeserved.[37] How then should one 'sow blame upon sinners'? Part of the answer may be that there should be no personal

[36] Cf. Most 1985, 87.

[37] In Bulman's analysis of *phthonos*, it is *phthonos* itself that is the object of Pindaric blame (1992, 4). The image of the 'bite' of bad-speaking, of course, again belongs to the sphere of consumption. Cf. *N.* 8.23, with the discussion of Gentili *et al.* 1995, 387; Steiner 2002, 301. Burton 1962, 119 argues that the run of the passage requires that 'fleeing the bite' refer only to avoiding being a slanderer oneself (cf. the similar argument of Most 1985, 88), but speaking and being spoken of are reciprocal and connected actions.

involvement on the part of the blamer. Though Archilochus fattens himself on hatred, Pindar stands far way from this, which may indicate emotional, as well as moral distance.[38] As we have seen, Pindar reports the outcomes of actions and poetic strategies matter-of-factly and without vitriol.[39] Even in passages that are evidently the result of a judgment of negative value, like the narrative of Ixion, his language is restrained.[40] It is god, not Pindar, who 'bows down some mortal who is lofty minded'. A large sweep of the first three triads, then, has been given over to speech and action that test the boundaries of divine and mortal judgment and the means by which these judgments are rendered effective or ineffective.

A little later in the ode, Pindar returns to the problem, this time using myth to focus on the civic context. Evocation of Rhadamanthys, judge of the dead leads to a consideration of slander, the role of the just citizen, and the connection of slander with a failure to understand the implications of divine preeminence. After exhorting the tyrant Hieron to 'be what he has learned to be' (72), he remarks that an ape is always fair (*kalos*) in the eyes of children, but Rhadamanthys … (*P.* 2.73–78):

> has got as his lot a blameless fruit of wits,
> nor does he give pleasure to his heart within through deception,
> the sort of things that always follow a mortal because of the stratagems
> of whisperers.
> The suggestions of slanderers are an unconquerable evil for both.
> Their tempers are intently like those of foxes.
> But what profit is this that comes to pass through profit?

> … φρενῶν
> ἔλαχε καρπὸν ἀμώμητον, οὐδ' ἀπάταισι θυ-
> μὸν τέρπεται ἔνδοθεν,
> οἷα ψιθύρων παλάμαις ἕπετ' αἰεὶ βροτῷ.

[38] For moral distance see Miller 1981, 140–141; Most 1985, 89–90 n. 76.

[39] Cf. Plato, *Laws* 935e–936b, which enjoins that no composer of comedy, lyric, or iambic shall be allowed to hold a citizen up to laughter in word or deed. Those who have prior permission shall be allowed to do so, but only *without anger* and in play (ἄνευ θυμοῦ μὲν μετὰ παιδιᾶς, 936a4).

[40] Miller 1981, 137–138 suggests that the function of the *khreos*-motif passage at 52–56 is to make a show of rejecting the censorious treatment of Ixion that preceded. Most 1985, 88–89 rejects this interpretation on the grounds that criticism of Ixion is entirely justified. My approach is somewhat different. Pindar's rejection of *kakagoria* does have implications for his account of Ixion, not because that account was 'bad speaking' but because it struck a balance between the negative judgment called for by his crime (and validated by divine punishment) and the abusive treatment characteristic of an Archilochus.

ἄμαχον κακὸν ἀμφοτέροις διαβολιᾶν ὑποφάτιες,
ὀργαῖς ἀτενὲς ἀλωπέκων ἴκελοι.
κέρδει δὲ τί μάλα τοῦτο κερδαλέον τελέθει;

Pindar, on the other hand, is like a cork bobbing on the surface of the sea and will not be dragged under. The poet then moves to the political level with the passage we have had occasion to discuss before: a deceitful citizen cannot utter an effective word among good men, although he creates ruin by his fawning, while a straight-talking man flourishes in every constitutional situation (82–88). As earlier, the role of the jealous and the greedy is tied into the divine dispensation (*P.* 2.88–92):

But one must not strive against god
who raises at one time the fortunes of one group and at other times
gives great fame to others.
But not even this cheers the mind of the envious.
Certain people dragging at a measuring line excessively
fix a painful wound in their own heart,
before they achieve what they conceive in their mind.

χρὴ
δὲ πρὸς θεὸν οὐκ ἐρίζειν,
ὃς ἀνέχει τοτὲ μὲν τὰ κείνων, τότ' αὖθ' ἑτέροις
ἔδωκεν μέγα κῦδος. ἀλλ' οὐδὲ ταῦτα νόον
ἰαίνει φθονερῶν· στάθμας δέ τινες ἑλκόμενοι
περισσᾶς ἐνέπαξαν ἕλ-
κος ὀδυναρὸν ἑᾷ πρόσθε καρδίᾳ,
πρὶν ὅσα φροντίδι μητίονται τυχεῖν.

This sequence, which occurs almost at the end of the ode, repeats the familiar grouping of bad speaking, excess, profit and the lack of it, and failure. Once again (as with Ixion and Archilochus) the attempt to benefit oneself by inappropriate means backfires. Those who pull the measuring line too tight wound themselves (and like Ixion they work their own destruction before achieving their plans, 92). Those who think they achieve profit (*kerdos*) through slander find it to be empty. The straight talker flourishes. Yet the speech of slanderers is an 'unconquerable evil' (76). Bad talking is an inescapable condition of life. One cannot fight it. What is important is that one resist the temptation to enjoy it and perpetuate it. This is achieved by being alert to standards of judgment, and I hope to have shown throughout this paper that the early fifth century was a time when standards of judgment for the good and the bad were subject to negotiation. *Pythian* 2's meditations on envy and slander are framed by contrasting

references to a standard of judgment. Children are too easily pleased (for them an ape is beautiful), while deceitful and jealous slanderers are always trying to stretch the line too tight—their standard is too high. Between the two is the judicious Rhadamanthys—who cannot be associated with blame and takes no delight in lies. The choice of Rhadamanthys here reflects both the tradition of his integrity, because of which he was made a judge of the dead, and because his judgments, coming as they do at the end of life, cannot undergo revision by subsequent events. His is a final assessment, which again contrast the vicissitudes that make value judgments so difficult on the mortal plane.

These vicissitudes form the object of more gnomic reflection on the role of god at 87–90. As earlier, he gives fame to whom he pleases, but now the emphasis is on the instability of good fortune. This instability should mollify the envious, but does not. We may note also that this instability may have political overtones, since reference to it follows immediately upon the poet's statement of constitutional variation that nevertheless allows a straight talker to flourish. Different polities prevail in different cities and ideological measuring lines will be cut to fit the situation. What is required in such situations is flexibility, broad-mindedness, and a prudent reluctance to jump to hasty judgments. These are political virtues, but they are also epinician ones, and so it is not surprising that Pindar, comparing himself to a cork, enmeshes himself in the web of civic relationships even as he lays down the standards for effective speech. The speech of slanderers is ineffective—they cannot utter a word that has *kratos*, and here they are contrasted with the preeminence of the honest citizen and also Rhadamanthys, who has, indeed, a final—and effective—word. Poetic and political speech converge.

A similar convergence marks *Pythian* 4.283–292, where Pindar pleads with the victor, King Arcesilaus, to allow Damophilus the exile to return to Cyrene. The judiciousness of Damophilus is described in terms reminiscent of Rhadamanthys (*P.* 4.283–287):

> He deprives an evil tongue of its shining voice,
> and has learned to hate the hybristic,
> not striving against the good,
> nor delaying any accomplishment.
> For among mortals opportunity has a short measure.
> He knows it well.

> ὀρφανίζει μὲν κακὰν γλῶσσαν φαεννᾶς ὀπός,
> ἔμαθε δ' ὑβρίζοντα μισεῖν,

οὐκ ἐρίζων ἀντία τοῖς ἀγαθοῖς,
οὐδὲ μακύνων τέλος οὐδέν. ὁ γὰρ και-
ρὸς πρὸς ἀνθρώπων βραχὺ μέτρον ἔχει.
εὖ νιν ἔγνωκεν·

We are uncertain what Damophilus' offense had been, but it is notable that when Pindar makes his plea for recall he concentrates on Damophilus' relationship with bad speech: Damophilus is not the sort of person who gives rise to gossip, either as perpetrator or as object. Even the language of knowing *kairos* and not delaying any accomplishment is calculated to have resonance both in the world of affairs and the world of poetry: these are poetic as well as political virtues. When Damophilus returns, then, he will take up the lyre at the symposium (293–297) and live a life of peace, neither offending nor being offended by his fellow citizens.

We have already had occasion to consider *Pythian* 11, where I foregrounded Pindar's hesitancy in ascribing a motive to Clytaemnestra's murder of her husband, and the important role played by speech, both poetic and otherwise. Whereas *Olympian* 1 and *Pythians* 2 and 4 are written for monarchical patrons, *Pythian* 11 is famous for its negative evaluation of such constitutions. The poet chooses the middle estate and 'blames the lot of tyrannies' (53). The function of the myth of Clytaemnestra in such a poem has long been the subject of debate, although Young probably came close to the mark when he declared that the point of the myth (dealing with murder and mayhem in a monarchical family) is that it does *not* apply to the victor.[41] Certainly it seems that the problem of speech and badness is most pressing in a monarchical constitution and therefore the relevant issues involved are easier to isolate. This may explain why Pindar employs this mythical exemplum, because it presents the themes of the interaction of speech, poetry, and the community with particular clarity. When one strives for 'common excellences' the jealous are warded off (*P.* 11.54). Yet achievements elevate one above the common—this can happen either because one has won a victory, or because, like Clytaemnestra, one inhabits a particularly fraught constitutional situation.[42] When one has reached the heights, one must avoid hybris in order to leave behind a good reputation (55–58).

[41] Young 1968, 17.

[42] This is one reason that the epinician poet is anxious to portray athletic victory as benefaction for the community: Kurke 1991, 170, 193–194.

Clytaemnestra's adultery was impossible to conceal because of other people's tongues. The citizens are 'bad speakers' because prosperity generates corresponding envy, while 'a man of humble aspirations roars unnoticed' (29–30). We are encouraged to conclude that Clytaemnestra committed murder because she knew her crime could not remain hidden after Agamemnon's return given the inevitability of 'bad speaking' and gossip. In addition to the poet's reserve about Clytaemnestra's motive, we should note that Pindar goes out of his way to present the response of the citizens as not ethically based. Her sin is, to be sure 'most hateful for young wives', but 'impossible to hide' follows almost immediately, and it is this characterization that receives an extensive gloss in terms of the epinician sins of envy and evil speech. Although Clytaemnestra is by no means favorably presented, the emphasis is on the envy generated by her position and the role of bad speech in the murder (obscure though its precise function may be).

I have left for the last the complex and interesting case of Odysseus in *Nemeans* 7 and 8. In both odes, Odysseus is associated with exaggerated praise and the underestimation of more worthy achievements, those of Ajax, and in both cases this can only happen because skills of verbal deception work on a preexisting substrate of jealousy. In *Nemean* 8, the poet remarks that it is dangerous to put new words to the test (*N.* 8.21–26, 32–34):

> Words are a relish for the envious—
> Envy that always cleaves to the good, but does not strive against the
>   inferior.
> This it was that feasted upon the son of Telamon
> and rolled him onto his sword.
> In painful strife, forgetfulness holds down someone who is inarticulate
> but mighty in his heart,
> and the greatest prize is offered to shifty falsehood.
> For in secret votes, the Greeks paid court to Odysseus …
> … So then, hateful persuasion existed even long ago,
> the companion of flattering *muthoi*,
> deceitful thinking, an evil-working reproach,
> which does violence to what is shining,
> but exalts the rotten fame of the obscure.
>
> … ὄψον δὲ λόγοι φθονεροῖσιν,
> ἅπτεται δ' ἐσλῶν ἀεί, χειρόνεσσι δ' οὐκ ἐρίζει.
> κεῖνος καὶ Τελαμῶνος δάψεν υἱόν,
>   φασγάνῳ ἀμφικυλίσαις.
> ἦ τιν' ἄγλωσσον μέν, ἦτορ δ' ἄλκιμον, λάθα κατέχει
> ἐν λυγρῷ νείκει· μέγιστον δ' αἰόλῳ ψεύ-

δει γέρας ἀντέταται.
κρυφίαισι γὰρ ἐν ψάφοις Ὀδυσσῆ Δαναοὶ θεράπευσαν·
...
ἐχθρὰ δ' ἄρα πάρφασις ἦν καὶ πάλαι,
αἱμύλων μύθων ὁμόφοι-
τος, δολοφραδής, κακοποιὸν ὄνειδος·
ἃ τὸ μὲν λαμπρὸν βιᾶται,
τῶν δ' ἀφάντων κῦδος ἀντείνει σαθρόν.

Odysseus won the contest for the arms of Achilles, even though his achievements were not equal to Ajax's, because the Greeks paid court to him in a secret vote. Pindar's conclusion is that deceitful persuasion and misrepresentation must have been at work. We are to think that Odysseus created the shifty falsehood and thus the deception that works evil (*kakopoion*) and is a reproach. His too are the crafty *muthoi.* Again, however, we are made aware of the complicity of ordinary people in working ill. Words are a relish for the envious (one notes, again, the recurrence of the eating metaphor in association with evil speech), but the mere existence of a superior person is the food. The trouble is compounded when the talented individual is inarticulate. We start, then, with a non-verbal situation of achievement on one side and resentment on the other, and words act to crystallize the dynamics of jealousy. Odysseus' deception can work on people because they are already jealous, and their jealousy feasts on and consumes Ajax with deceptive speech as a kind of ghastly tomato ketchup. On this occasion, moreover, evil speech was successful—at least until Pindar came along to set the record straight, 'praising the praiseworthy and sowing blame on sinners' (*N.* 8.39).

In *Nemean* 7, the power of poetry to deceive is added to the mix (*N.* 7.20–27):

But I believe that
the story of Odysseus is greater than his suffering,
because of Homer with his sweet verses,
since something majestic lies on his falsehoods and his winged contrivance.
Sophia deceives, leading people astray with *muthoi.*
The greatest majority of men have a blind heart,
for if it were possible to see the truth,
mighty Ajax, in anger over the armor,
would not have fixed the smooth sword through his middle.

ἐγὼ δὲ πλέον' ἔλπομαι
λόγον Ὀδυσσέος ἢ πάθαν

> διὰ τὸν ἁδυεπῆ γενέσθ' Ὅμηρον·
> ἐπεὶ ψεύδεσί οἱ ποτανᾷ ⟨τε⟩ μαχανᾷ
> σεμνὸν ἔπεστί τι· σοφία
> δὲ κλέπτει παράγοισα μύθοις. τυφλὸν δ' ἔχει
> ἦτορ ὅμιλος ἀνδρῶν ὁ πλεῖστος. εἰ γὰρ ἦν
> ἓ τὰν ἀλάθειαν ἰδέμεν, οὔ κεν ὅπλων χολωθεὶς
> ὁ καρτερὸς Αἴας ἔπαξε διὰ φρενῶν
> λευρὸν ξίφος·

The emphasis here, at least explicitly, is not so much on Odysseus' talent for deception, but on the role of Homer. The juxtaposition, however, of Homer and Odysseus, and the terms in which it is expressed ('something majestic lies on his falsehoods and his winged contrivance') seems designed to bring the two into parallel.[43] Both lead people astray with tales, but they can only do so because men are blind to begin with. Once again Pindar steps forward to be a witness for the truth, yet he presents a more pessimistic view of the possibilities of verbal deception than in some of the odes considered above. When Pindar corrects the misapprehension expressed in the poetry of Homer, his amendment of the past acts both as a confirmation of his own poetic authority and as a vindication of the proper functioning of the system of praise.[44] It is striking, however, that in *Nemean* 7 Pindar refrains from attributing jealousy or any of what I have been calling the epinician sins to Homer. Jealousy plays a role in *Nemean* 8, rather than *Nemean* 7, where we are dealing with blindness. Because Homer is a kind of hypertrophic praise poet (he praises Odysseus too much), he is awarded *semnotês*, rather than being called hateful, and this is telling. It shows Pindar's reluctance to engage in sniping at a cultural icon, which might convict him of jealousy himself.

Success and failure in a world of vicissitude often seem inexplicable, but wisdom consists, at least partly, in recognizing this fact. Knowledge of vicissitude enables us to escape jealousy, as we saw in *Pythian* 2 and to maintain a prudent reserve with regard to one's value judgments—judgments that must be subject to revision in the face of divine action. The awareness of vicissitude is, of course, a *Leitmotif* of archaic poetry, yet it is in Pindar that such awareness becomes intellectualized into a strategy for successful life and successful poetry, part of the ethics

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[43] As Most 1985, 150–151 explains, it is unproductive to try to distinguish whether the οἱ of line 22 refers to Homer or Odysseus: 'Pindar seems to have written deliberately in a way that makes it impossible to distinguish whose lies and winged device are meant'.

[44] Cf. Bulman 1992, 37–38 (on *N.* 8).

of the genre. It is instructive to juxtapose Bacchylides 14.1–7 (above, p. 37f.) with the passages we have been considering in *Nemean* 8 and *Pythian* 2. As we have seen, Bacchylides expresses the almost Theognidian sentiment that misfortune ruins the good, and makes even the bad (*kakon*) man shine on high (*hupsiphanê*). Thus good fortune sent by god is the best one should hope for (*ariston*). In *Pythian* 2 Pindar spins a similar thought slightly differently. God does what he likes: if you are a high thinker (*hupsiphronôn*) he may bring you down. To others he gives fame (*kudos*). Being rich with a fated fortune is the best part (*ariston*) of wisdom (*sophia*) and this is closely juxtaposed with the avoidance of Archilochean bad speaking. Here the vicissitude theme is connected with poetry: ageless fame, wisdom and poetic skill, helpless Archilochus. Rather than being a foil for the present celebration, as it is in Bacchylides, it is part of a meditation on how one should react to success. *Nemean* 8 presents an even more marked treatment of vicissitude. Here envy, deception, and flattery do violence to the shining and exalt the fame of the obscure (*N.* 8.33). The exchange of positions between the good and the bad was faction based in Theognis, but here it is the epinician sins of bad speaking that reverse the natural order. In this worst-case scenario, the problems of bad speech have almost replaced the gods in control of fortune—it's the sins, rather than the gods, that enable the once obscure person to shine on high. Bad speech, then, is a major player in the incorrect functioning of the cosmos, unless a god or a god-like poet should take a hand.

There is a tension here. On the one hand, Pindar will say that a deceitful citizen cannot make a speech that has an effect on the good (*P.* 2.81), or that an envious man rolls around an 'empty' thought in the dark (*N.* 4.40). At *O.* 2.86–88 he compares himself and his patron to the eagle of Zeus, against which other chattering crows cry words that are ineffectual, not to be fulfilled (*akranta*).[45] Bad speech is ineffective and cannot make its way from the evil mouth into the world of action. Good speech is effective: when Pelops spoke to Poseidon in *O.* 1.86 'he did not lay hold of unfulfilled (*akrantois*) words'. Yet we have also seen that certain kinds of bad speech seem to be able to exalt the undeserving and obscure the good. It may be that these episodes are canvassed so that we can rejoice in Pindar's correction, his transformation of their speech from effective to ineffective, but they also play their part

[45] Cf. Montiglio 2000, 87–89.

in drawing the outlines of a universe where the poles of conduct are defined by verbal behavior.

Although the ethical battles are fought over speech, the language Pindar uses to describe bad speaking is remarkably physical. The prominence of eating imagery in some of the passages we have been considering is notable. Eating and its perversions were a major issue in *Olympian* 1, where speaking correctly and incorrectly about the gods and one's neighbors was juxtaposed to cannibalistic dinner parties and other perverted symposia.[46] We have seen Archilochus 'fattening himself' on hatred to no effect, words as a 'relish' to the envious, and envy feasting on Ajax like the Homeric dogs and birds that threaten the unburied warrior.[47] The notion of eating too much or wanting too much also brings surfeit (*koros*) into the picture, with its attendant notions of hybris.[48] One thing to say of this picture of passionate greed and consumption is that it may well resonate with the (re)performance context of the odes, which may often have been sympotic.[49] A good host will not offer too much, nor will a good guest take too much or criticize the menu, and this goes for banquets as well as poems. Yet the symposium is also prey for the parasite and the uninvited guest. As Deborah Steiner has shown, greed and gluttony, and perverse forms of eating are linked with the practice of abuse and iambic poetry, both because the gluttonous are the object of the iambic poet's abuse, and because the abuse poet can be charged with those vices himself; Pindar uses these images to distinguish his practice from that of abuse poets.[50] We may add that eating metaphors hold a special place in judgments about bad speech because the sympotic table is a symbol of reciprocity that demands orderly exchange of discourse and because it contains within itself the possibility for insatiability and illness. Bad speech is insatiable because it yields to personal hatred, greed, and jealousy, and is not self-aware. To this we can oppose the careful abridgements of the good praise poet where poetic self-awareness is almost fetishized. Speech, especially bad speech, maps and inscribes itself onto

[46] Much has been and will continue to be said about how these themes fit into the larger context of Hieron's monarchical symposia (Slater 1977, 200; Steiner 2002).

[47] Nagy 1979, 226, with Steiner 2002, 301. For a more extended consideration of the connections between greed and abuse, transgressions in consumption and speech, see Steiner 2002 *passim*.

[48] Mackie 2003, 9–37.

[49] Strauss-Clay 1999.

[50] Steiner 2002; cf. Brown 2006.

the human body. Whereas awareness of vicissitude (and the positive connotations associated with this) is intellectualized into poetic method and ethics, thoughtless envy is physically expressed.

5. *Conclusion*

The struggle between good and evil in Pindar plays itself out most insistently not in the realm of deeds but in the realm of words. His focus is on speech acts. A real issue is whether the debased speech act, an act of slander or envy, can really be classified as an act at all. Pindar would like to deny reality to this class of speech, but is stopped by the insistent evidence of its effects. Epinician exists to parade its measurement of people against a standard of excellence, but it must strike a balance between pulling the measuring line too tight and defeating itself, and setting the bar so low that its claims become meaningless. In the epinician world virtue often tends towards poetic virtue and vice towards poetic vice. Respecting the right moment (*kairos*), not being overwhelmed by greed for gain ('I have not accepted this commission only for money but because the victor really deserves it'), hating hybris, not engaging in evil speech—all characterize the good citizen as well as the good poet. A continuum stretches between private, public, and poetic speech and these realms enjoy a reciprocal relationship. Only among the 'good' does language exist in the proper relationship of correspondence with the truth, and the good can be identified only situationally and in retrospect.

Given the constraints placed upon judgments of baseness in the world of epinician patronage, the people on whom the poet sows blame, are (reflexively) those who sow blame. These are the 'bad', and generically speaking, they are the safest target. Far from being an unconsidered reflex of aristocratic ethics, the Pindaric construction of badness works with motifs such as vicissitude, greed, profit, tact, and the poet's task so that a coherent picture emerges of a world where the values showcased in epinician poetry are central to an orderly cosmos. We can see this as an aspect of Pindar's well-known self-consciousness; this is a poet whose persona reflects extensively and obtrusively on the proper function of his art, and who is concerned to lay out for his audience his poetic methodology. By tracing this methodology we internalize Pindar's presentation of the rules of his genre, and as we learn to praise we learn also to be good citizens in any situation, alive to the standards

of judgment used by ourselves and others. The only unredeemable bad act is a category mistake, where one confuses the nature of the difference between the mortal and the divine, and consequently the codes that govern effective and ineffective speech.

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CHAPTER THREE

UGLINESS AND VALUE IN THE *LIFE OF AESOP*

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1. *Introduction*

The representation of Aesop in the opening of the *Life of Aesop* reads less like a description of an historical figure than a catalogue of types of badness (*Vita G* 1):

> The fabulist Aesop, the great benefactor of mankind, was by chance a slave but by origin a Phrygian of Phrygia, of loathsome aspect, worthless as a servant, potbellied, misshapen of head, snub-nosed, inarticulate, swarthy, dwarfish, bandy-legged, short-armed, squint-eyed, liver-lipped—a portentous monstrosity. In addition to this he had a defect more serious than his unsightliness in being speechless, for he was dumb and could not talk. (tr. Daly)
>
> Ὁ πάντα βιωφελέστατος Αἴσωπος, ὁ λογοποιός, τῇ μὲν τύχῃ ἦν δοῦλος, τῷ δὲ γένει Φρὺξ τῆς Φρυγίας· κακοπινὴς τὸ ἰδέσθαι, εἰς ὑπηρεσίαν σαπρός, προγάστωρ, προκέφαλος, σιμός, σόρδος,[1] μέλας, κολοβός, βλαισός, γαλιάγκων, στρεβλός, μυστάκων, προσημαῖνον ἁμάρτημα. πρὸς τούτοις ἐλάττωμα μεῖζον εἶχε τῆς ἀμορφίας τὴν ἀφωνίαν· ἦν δὲ καὶ νωδὸς καὶ οὐδὲν ἠδύνατο λαλεῖν.

This passage, with its exaggerated, cartoonish list of defects, introduces a man who is the near opposite of the Greek ideal of the καλοκαγαθός[2] (the Greek who is 'both good to look at and manifests goodness in action').[3] Aesop is foreign (a 'Phrygian of Phrygia',[4] Φρὺξ τῆς Φρυ-

[1] Perry's text, which I use throughout, reads σιμός, σόρδος ('i.e. *surdus*') here, which poses a problem for the translator. Daly, whom I follow throughout, translates σιμός ('snub-nosed') but omits translation of σόρδος altogether, perhaps because any sense given to σόρδος that anticipates Aesop's ἀφωνία does not make good sense with πρὸς τούτοις ('in *addition* to these …'); cf. Ferrari's (1997) reading, σιμός, λορδός (*gibboso*, i.e. 'hunchbacked'), which seems to settle this difficulty.

[2] See Lissarague 2000, 136.

[3] Dover 1974, 41.

[4] See Dillery 1999, 269–271, for a discussion of this seemingly redundant phrase.

γίας); he is not a free citizen, but a δοῦλος; afflicted with ἀφωνία, he is totally inarticulate;[5] and, worst of all, he is utterly, comically deformed.[6] In terms of his physical appearance, speechlessness, social status, and nationality, Aesop is the very picture of Greek badness. But the opening of the *Life* also hints at a significant, programmatic paradox: for all the many ways in which he is ugly, for his inability to speak, and for his 'uselessness as a servant' (εἰς ὑπηρεσίαν σαπρός, literally his 'rottenness'), Aesop is simultaneously called ὁ πάντα βιωφελέστατος Αἴσωπος, ὁ λογοποιός, 'the fabulist Aesop, the great benefactor of mankind'. Thus the opening is practically a fable in its own right: the implicit moral is that utility, beneficence, and good stories can be found even in the most unexpected and unattractive packages. There is hope for the reader of the *Life of Aesop* who continues reading beyond the opening paragraph—hope that this grotesque list of physical deformities does not tell the whole story.

Over the course of the *Life* the fabulist does overcome his essential badness and transforms himself into a distinguished, globe-trotting sage by means of his wit, wisdom, and exceptional mastery of signs and riddles.[7] Nonetheless, Aesop's repulsive ugliness remains a significant theme beyond the opening sentences:[8] throughout the *Life* an encounter with the ugly Aesop compels one to make a decision—should he be dismissed out of hand because of his outrageous appearance or should he be engaged in some way in spite of it? There are numerous scenes in which observers, hosts, and bystanders comment on Aesop's body and speculate about its potential relationship to his utility.[9] On a few occasions Aesop is rejected for being too ugly to engage, and even those who decide to listen to him invariably do so after first posting some response to his ugliness. Such passages constitute a thematically linked series of receptions and rejections of Aesop, in which ugliness is consistently flagged as a key determinant of his value as a source of wisdom.

[5] At least, in the opening of the *Life*, before he is granted the gift of speech by the goddess Isis (*Vita G* 7).

[6] These features of Aesop's essential 'otherness' have recently been discussed by Lissarague 2000, who comments (132) that Aesop provides 'a good departure for reflecting on notions of identity and alterity in the ancient Greek world'.

[7] For a nuanced and convincing description of the literary structure of the *Life of Aesop*, see Holzberg 1992, 33–75.

[8] Cf. *Vita G* 1, 14, 16, 19, 21, 24, 26, 30ff., 87, 98.

[9] E.g., *Vita G* 11, 15, 27, 55, 87–88.

In this chapter, I will focus on the function of ugliness in evaluations of the fabulist in the *Life of Aesop* and in an episode from the history of its critical reception in order to gain a clearer sense of what is distinctive about Aesop's ugliness. In short, I want to ask 'Why is Aesop so ugly?' and 'How is physical badness tied to Aesop's specific style of story-telling?' Because there is scant ancient evidence for his exaggerated ugliness outside of the *Life of Aesop* tradition,[10] it is impossible to know who first represented Aesop as one of the ugliest men who ever lived, and thus difficult to answer questions such as 'When did anecdotes about his ugliness begin to circulate?' or 'Is the description that opens the *Life* pure fiction?'. While these questions cannot be satisfactorily answered, the second one, in particular, should lead to further questions: if the legend of Aesop's ugliness is an invention of the *Life of Aesop* tradition, then *why* was it invented? What purpose does it serve? What sort of attitudes towards the fabulist and his fables might this particular type of badness reflect?

These are the questions that motivate this study. Specifically I will draw attention to two distinct but not unrelated aspects of Aesop's ugliness as it is represented in the *Life*. First, I will suggest that the emphasis placed upon the process of evaluating Aesop's appearance before hearing him speak finds striking parallels in the critical reception of the text, most notably in Richard Bentley's famous opinion that the *Life of Aesop* is a medieval forgery. For a twenty-first-century reader, Bentley's sober critical evaluations of the formal features of the text are overshadowed by his more overwrought response to the image of the fabulist presented in the text; his comments on Aesop's ugliness draw attention to the way in which the *Life of Aesop* thematizes such responses, virtually encoding its troubled afterlife in its narrative. After considering Bentley's reactions to the *Life of Aesop* (section 2), I will turn to the text itself and offer some reflections on passages in which links between Aesop's ugliness and his value are most conspicuous (sections 3 and 4). The *meaning* of Aesop's appearance is discovered, contested,

[10] A small Attic red-figure cup (ca. 450 BCE Vatican, Museo Gregoriano Etrusco inv. 16552) depicting an 'intellectual' with an enormous head carrying on a discussion with a fox is often (plausibly) assumed to represent Aesop. Himerius (fourth century CE), too, is a late exception (*Orationes* 13.5; Perry T 30), although the description he offers seems to rely on the details and tone of the *Vita* tradition. The ancient evidence for visual and textual representations of Aesop outside of the biographical tradition has been collected and analyzed most recently by Lissarague 2000.

and deprecated throughout the *Life*. Words such as κακός, αἰσχρός and σαπρός are used in evaluations of Aesop's appearance, as well as words for 'trash', such as περικάθαρμα and ἀπόμαγμα. The relationship between Aesop's κακία (here understood as 'physical badness') and his value functions in a way that draws attention to similarities between the act of assessing the ugly fabulist and that of receiving the wisdom of his fables (section 5).

2. *Richard Bentley and the* Life *and* Fables *of Aesop*

Any discussion of badness in the *Life of Aesop* must begin by acknowledging the badness of the condition of our texts themselves. As an anonymous work that survives in multiple recensions, the *Life* has had an especially turbulent history.[11] Its provenance has always been a mystery: while episodes in Aesop's life were known and recounted as early as the 5th cent. BCE, there has been significant disagreement over when a unified, written *Life* may have first circulated.[12] Characterized alternatively

[11] The outlines of this history have been sketched in numerous recent studies; see, especially, Holzberg 2002, 72–76 and Hansen 1998, 106–111. Several versions of the *Life of Aesop* are contained in Ben Edwin Perry's 1952 *Aesopica, Vol. 1*. In addition to a Latin version called the *Vita Lolliana* and several minor *Lives* written in the Middle Ages, Perry's book includes editions of the two principal recensions: *Vita G* (on pp. 35–77, named for Grottaferrata, the site of the abbey from which it disappeared sometime in the 1700s), which survives in a single manuscript that was rediscovered in the 1930s in the Pierpont Morgan Library in New York City and is believed to be the closest to the archetype of the original novel; and *Vita W* (pp. 81–107, named for A. Westermann, publisher of the *editio princeps* in 1845), which is known from many manuscripts and was reworked in the Byzantine period and in the Renaissance and subsequently translated into several European languages. The text history is elaborated in Perry 1933 and 1936. Since Perry, *Vita G* has been re-edited by Papathomopoulos 1991 and Ferrari 1997; *Vita W* has been re-edited by Papathomopoulos 1999 and Karla 2001. Another version of the *Life*, probably written by Maximus Planudes in the thirteenth century, to which I will allude below, can be found in Eberhard 1872; according to Perry (1933, 199) 'the manuscripts of the Planudean version differ only slightly among themselves … and their archetype … depends entirely, or almost entirely, upon a late manuscript belonging to the Westermann recension'.

[12] Adrados 1999, 271–285 has argued for a written *Life* in the Hellenistic period, which would have introduced Demetrius of Phaleron's collection of Aesopic fables. But it is more common to date the *Life* to the second century CE (see, e.g., Perry 1936 and Holzberg 2002). For an introductory discussion of the *Life* in terms of its relationship to the fable collections, see Holzberg 2002, 72–76. On the antiquity of stories about Aesop that lie behind the written *Lives*, see Perry 1936, 1–26; Nagy 1979, 280–290, 301–316; West 1984; and Kurke 2003.

as a *Volksbuch*, a chapbook, a romance, and a popular novel, and now anthologized as 'comic biography' in William Hansen's 1998 *Anthology of Popular Greek Literature*,[13] the *Life* is written in sloppy, frequently illegible Greek; it cannot be securely ascribed to any author or period; and it is marked by an incurable generic indeterminacy.[14] Like Aesop himself, the *Life of Aesop* is insufficiently 'Greek', as reflected by its position on the margins of the history of Greek literature. It is no surprise that the overall strangeness of its textual history has played a prominent role in its critical reception. Even during the recent surge of interest in editing and otherwise critically evaluating the *Life of Aesop*, it has repeatedly been demonstrated that the text's status as something less than 'classical' (i.e. 'good') literature is somehow definitive of its value. For example, in provocative and illuminating readings of the *Life of Aesop*, John J. Winkler, Keith Hopkins, and Leslie Kurke have each emphasized the text's 'popular' nature, comparing its usefulness for classicists to that of studying folktales,[15] newspapers,[16] slasher films and television commercials.[17] Part of the utility of the *Life of Aesop* for these studies, I think, lies in its physical, textual history: its anonymity and 'popular' circulation serve as starting points for using the text to reconstruct 'popular' attitudes in periods ranging from fifth-century Greece (Kurke) to first-century (Hopkins) and second-century (Winkler) Rome. Once put into dialogue with 'legitimate' classical texts, the *Life of Aesop* has proved itself useful for revealing otherwise obscured aspects of the contestation of authority at Delphi, Roman attitudes towards their slaves, and it has even been successful as a kind of litmus test for identifying genuine folk elements in Apuleius. These readings of the *Life* have, in some suggestive ways, paralleled reactions to the figure of Aesop that

[13] For a recent overview of generic labels for the *Life of Aesop* and their various connotations, see Hansen 1998, 106–110; cf. also the helpful discussion in Hägg 1997, 181–186.

[14] Too long and complex to be counted as just another literary *vita*, the *Life of Aesop* receives only passing mention in works such as Lefkowitz 1981 (for good reason, since Aesop cannot easily be counted among the poets) and in studies of ancient biography (see, e.g., Momigliano 1971, 27f.); at the same time, the *Life*'s inclusion in studies of the ancient novel has been, until recently, severely limited. Holzberg's studies (e.g. 1992 and 1996), which have made the case for reading the *Life* as a unified, literary novel, have gone far towards changing this.

[15] Winkler 1985, 279.

[16] Hopkins 1993, 6.

[17] Kurke 2003, 78.

are embedded in its narrative: what appears at first glance to be useless and ugly is repeatedly found to contain a distinctly lowbrow but nevertheless surprisingly practical utility. These critical responses to the *Life of Aesop* also reflect changing attitudes towards ideas of the 'classical' and, in a broader sense, the place of badness in classical texts and the place of 'bad' texts in the study of the Classics.

But interest in the usefulness of 'popular' (i.e. 'bad') literary material in the study of classical antiquity is a relatively recent phenomenon; historically, the *Life of Aesop* has had a far more difficult time establishing its value. Thus, before considering the relationship between ugliness and value *in* the *Life*, it will be helpful to consider Richard Bentley's famous and influential rejection of the *Life* as a non-classical work, in order to draw attention to the larger context of the history of the ugliness and value *of* the *Life*.

In 1697, Bentley published a version of what would become his monumental *Dissertations Upon the Epistles of Phalaris, Themistocles, Socrates, Euripides, and Upon the Fables of Aesop*, in which he set out to demonstrate that these works were not of ancient date, but inventions of the Middle Ages.[18] A milestone in the history of classical scholarship for its methodology and for its publication in English, Bentley's *Dissertation* is above all a work of destruction: the *Life* and *Fables* of Aesop, in addition to the *Letters* of Phalaris, Themistocles, Socrates, and Euripides, had recently been praised and cited as proof of the superiority of the ancients in the contemporary Battle of the Books;[19] Bentley sets out to devalue the *Letters* and the Aesopic material, i.e. to show that their worth had been overstated. Bentley demonstrates the spuriousness of the material by his groundbreaking combination of philological and historical evidence. But he also takes up the task of showing that those who had found these texts pleasing were, at the same time, thoroughly misguided in their aesthetic criteria and responses. He argues that all these texts are both *not* classical (i.e. they are post-antique, late products of the rhetorical schools) as well as *un*-classical (i.e. they lack the serious-

[18] Bentley's *Dissertation* was revised, expanded, and finally published in 1699 (page numbers below refer to 1699), offering rebuttals to the many critics who had challenged elements of the 1697 version and, overall, providing a more thorough critique of the spurious works (and their admirers). For general discussion of the place of the famous *Dissertation* in the context of Bentley's career, see Most 1989, 744–754; Pfeiffer 1976, 143–158; Sandys 1958, 401–410; Jebb 1882, 64–85.

[19] See Most 1989, 753–754, for discussion of Bentley's philological innovations in the context of the *Querelle des anciens et des modernes*.

ness and vitality their admirers ascribed to them). Bentley's treatment of the *Life* and *Fables* of Aesop in particular is striking for its mixture of technical argumentation (both text-critical and historical) and frank judgments of aesthetic value.

It is in the very last section of the *Dissertation* that Bentley turns his attention to Aesop's *Life* and *Fables*, both of which were enjoying enormous popularity in England. Claiming that the fables that had survived from antiquity and that filled these collections were 'the last and the worst' of the Greek ones, Bentley remarks that not one of them was 'from the pen of our Phrygian'.[20] The fables are ascribed instead to Maximus Planudes, the thirteenth-century Byzantine scholar and theologian.[21] First, Bentley demonstrates that the Greek of the *Life* and *Fables* was not of ancient date: on the one hand, he rejects the fables as prose paraphrases of the choliambics of Babrius and, on the other, he claims that the *Life* that accompanied them was a forgery (specifically, an invention of Planudes).[22] According to Bentley, the *Life* that Planudes invented was even *worse* than the 'last and worst' fables (1699, 437–438):

> That Ideot of a Monk has given us a Book, which he calls 'The Life of Aesop'; that, perhaps, cannot be matched in any language, for Ignorance and Nonsense. He picked up two or three true stories; That Aesop was a slave to one Xanthus, carried a burthen of bread, conversed with Croesus, and was put to death at Delphi: but the circumstances of these, and all his other Tales, are pure invention … Who can read, with any patience, that silly Discourse between Xanthus and his Man Aesop; not a bit better than our Penny-Merriments, printed at London Bridge?

[20] Bentley 1699, 433.

[21] For a general overview of Maximus Planudes in the context of the history of Byzantine scholarship, see Wilson 1983, 230–241. It is generally agreed that Maximus Planudes was indeed the editor (or 're-writer') of the *Life* and *Fables* in the collection commonly known as the *Accursiana*. Perry 1936, 204 describes the *Accursiana* as 'the modern vulgate recension of the Aesopic fables, the first collection to be published after the invention of printing, and from the *editio princeps* by Bonus Accursius (about 1479) down to the beginning of the nineteenth century its vogue was supreme'. Perry accepts the tradition that Planudes was responsible for the *Accursiana* material (see Perry 1936, 228). On the relationship between the *Life* of the *Accursiana* and the Westermann recension (*Vita W*, see above n. 11), see Perry 1933, 199.

[22] Bentley's assessment of the Greek is, of course, essentially correct. His error (if it can be called such) is that he does not entertain the possibility that Planudes had before him a text of the *Life* that was related to texts of ancient date. As Perry 1936, 228, writes: 'The skeptical attack upon this tradition, arising in an age when atheticism was highly fashionable, was fostered partly by the erroneous idea that Planudes must be the inventor, not merely the editor, of the fabulous biography of Aesop'.

For Bentley, the language, historical inaccuracies and overall silliness of the text relegate the *Life of Aesop* to the status of 'Penny-Merriments', the ubiquitous popular songs that were printed on broadsheets and sold for pennies on the streets of London.[23] By comparing the *Life of Aesop* to such popular traditions, Bentley underscores that it should have no place among classical texts. In this way Bentley's treatment of the Aesopic material fits into the *Dissertation*'s larger agenda of purifying the body of material worthy of the label 'classical', which had been deformed in this instance by the tastes of Byzantine monks and popularized by the interest of contemporary readers.[24]

In a surprising turn, Bentley does not waste any space identifying and correcting errors in the text of the *Life*—instead these final pages of his *Dissertation* are filled with refutation of the account of Aesop's physical appearance in the Planudean *Life* (1699, 438–439):

> But of all his injuries to Aesop, that which can least be forgiven him, is, the making such a Monster of him for Ugliness: an Abuse, that has found credit so universally; that all the modern Painters, since the time of Planudes, have drawn him in the worst Shapes and Features, that Fancy could invent. 'Twas an old Tradition among the Greeks, That Aesop revived again, and lived a second life. Should he revive once more, and see the Picture before the Book that carries his Name; could he think it drawn for Himself? or for the Monkey, or some strange Beast introduced in the Fables? But what Revelation had this Monk about Aesop's Deformity? For he must learn it by Dream and Vision, and not by ordinary methods of Knowledge. He lived about Two Thousand Years after him: and in all that tract of time, there's not one single Author that has given the least hint, that Aesop was ugly. What credit then can be given to an ignorant Monk, that broaches a new Story after so many Ages?

It is not merely that the fables and the biography are poorly written, filled with silly dialogue and sloppy history; it is Aesop's *ugliness*, above all, that is most offensive to Bentley (and, he assumes, would be to Aesop, too, if he were brought back to life to learn of it!). Bentley goes on to suggest that, in fact, Aesop must have been a 'very hand-

[23] See Patterson 1991, esp. 147 and 161 n. 13; and Lewis 1996, 71–98 for discussion of Richard Bentley's attitude towards the *Life* in the context of the significant role played by the figure of Aesop and his fables in contemporary literary debates and in (rapidly) changing conceptions of authorship in Augustan England.

[24] Praise of the *Letters of Phalaris* and of the *Fables* (to which Bentley's *Dissertations* is in part a response), articulated by Sir William Temple (among others), had led to an enormous surge in interest in English translations of the texts (see Lewis 1996, 71–98).

some' man, since, on the one hand, no ancient writer comments on his appearance and, on the other, Herodotus (2.134) tells us that Aesop was a companion of Rhodopis, a female slave renowned for her beauty.[25] For the purposes of this chapter, the reality of the historical Aesop's appearance is less significant than the manner in which Bentley implicitly links his revulsion in the face of Aesop's ugliness to his own rejection of the *Life* and *Fables* as post-classical forgeries. More remarkable in connection with Bentley's dismissal of the *Life* is that one of the principal themes running through the story is the way in which Aesop's ugliness is always revealed to be a false indicator of his worth as a source of valuable wit and wisdom.[26] Thus it is useful to compare a reaction such as Bentley's to the many hasty rejections of the fabulist that are incorporated into the narrative of his *Life*.

3. *Ugliness in the Aesopic tradition*

The idea that there can be a significant difference between outward appearance and actual utility or intelligence is a traditional theme in Aesopic fables. As examples, I offer only two well-known fables on the subject:

> '*The Fox and the Leopard*' (Perry 12)
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> A fox and a leopard were disputing over their beauty. When the leopard kept bringing up the intricate pattern of her skin at every turn, the fox interrupted and said, 'How much more beautiful I am than you, since it is not my skin but my mind that has the intricate pattern'. The story shows that the ornament of intellect is preferable to physical beauty. (tr. Daly)

[25] 1699, 438–440. The strangeness of Bentley's combination of, on the one hand, rationalized philological criticism and history (in his approach to the fables), and, on the other, instinctual judgments about such things as whom an attractive female slave would choose as her companion, was not lost on his contemporaries: '[Bentley] is extremely concern'd to have Aesop thought Handsome, at the same time he is endeavoring all he can to prove him no Author. He hopes by his civilities to his Person to atone for the Injuries he does him in his Writings: which is just such a compliment to Aesop's Memory, as it would be to Sir William Davenant's, should a man, in defiance of Common Fame, pretend to make out, that he had always a Good Nose upon his Face; but, however, he did not write Gondibert' (Boyle 1698, 283; cf. Patterson 1991, 161, n. 13). Davenant's syphilis had left him with a famously disfigured nose.

[26] Although it is difficult to know exactly which text(s) Bentley read, comparison of modern editions of *Vita G*, *Vita W*, and the *Planudean Vita* suggests that Aesop's ugliness

> ἀλώπηξ καὶ πάρδαλις περὶ κάλλους ἤριζον. τῆς δὲ παρδάλεως παρ' ἕκαστα τὴν τοῦ σώματος ποικιλίαν προβαλλομένης ἡ ἀλώπηξ ὑποτυχοῦσα ἔφη· 'καὶ πόσον ἐγὼ σοῦ καλλίων ὑπάρχω, ἥτις οὐ τὸ σῶμα, τὴν δὲ ψυχὴν πεποίκιλμαι'; ὁ λόγος δηλοῖ, ὅτι τοῦ σωματικοῦ κάλλους ἀμείνων ἐστὶν ὁ τῆς διανοίας κόσμος.

> '*The Fox to the Mask*' (Perry 27)

> A fox got into the workshop of a moulder and, as she was poking her nose into everything, came upon a tragic actor's mask. As she picked it up, she said, 'What a head to have no brains!' This fable is adapted to the man who has a magnificent physical appearance but no sense. (tr. Daly)

> ἀλώπηξ εἰσελθοῦσα εἰς πλάστου ἐργαστήριον καὶ ἕκαστον τῶν ἐνόντων διερευνῶσα ὡς περιέτυχε τραγῳδοῦ προσωπείῳ, τοῦτο ἐπάρασα εἶπεν· 'οἵα κεφαλὴ ἐγκέφαλον οὐκ ἔχει'. πρὸς ἄνδρα μεγαλοπρεπῆ μὲν σώματι, κατὰ ψυχὴν δὲ ἀλόγιστον ὁ λόγος εὔκαιρος.

In the first fable, the fox (a vixen, really) compares herself to the leopard by pointing out that, while the beautiful cat may have an ornate body (ποικιλία), the fox herself is more beautiful (καλλίων) with respect to her soul, cleverly playing on the applicability of both words—ποικίλος and κάλλος—to both σῶμα and ψυχή. In the next fable, the fox, holding up and looking at a dignified tragic mask, observes that such a fine head (κεφαλή) has no brain (ἐγκέφαλον) inside; the *epimythium* attached to the fable directs the message to the type of man who is beautiful (μεγαλοπρεπής) with respect to his σῶμα but senseless (ἀλόγιστος) in his ψυχή.

These two fox fables are, in some sense, 'meta-fables': the stories are both *about* the difference between appearance and reality as well as being *examples* of stories that are explicitly fictional (the fox can talk!) but which, with their clear and direct *epimythia*, are shown to contain meaningful messages beneath a surface of lies. A key difference between collected fables such as these and the stories that Aesop tells in the *Life* is the presence of the fabulist and his ugly body. Aesop's ugliness adds an extra layer to the fable-telling process. The elegant four-word definition of 'fable' which appears in Aelius Theon's *Progymnasmata* (1.59)—λόγος ψευδὴς εἰκονίζων ἀλήθειαν ('a fictional (or false) story which gives a semblance of the truth')—would need to be modified for fables narrated by Aesop in the *Life*: Aesop's stories in the *Life of Aesop*

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is given even more prominence in the ancient texts than in the reworked Byzantine version.

are 'fictional stories which give a semblance of the truth *told by a man whose body is itself a kind of false* λόγος *concealing his true nature*'. Anyone hearing the ugly Aesop tell a fable has, in important ways, already begun learning something about how fables work.

Among the many representations of fable-telling in the *Life of Aesop*, the scene on Samos best illustrates the ways in which appraisals of the fabulist's ugliness are implicitly linked to the reception of his stories. With his reputation as a master interpreter of riddles and signs now widespread, Aesop is brought before the people of Samos to interpret a portent. The initial reaction of the crowd is to explode into laughter (*Vita G* 87–88):

> But when the Samians saw Aesop, they burst out laughing and shouted, 'Bring us another interpreter to interpret this portent. What a monstrosity he is to look at! Is he a frog, or a hedgehog, or a potbellied jar, or a captain of monkeys, or a moulded jug, or a cook's gear, or a dog in a basket?' Aesop heard all this without turning a hair, and when he had gotten silence, he began to speak as follows: 'Men of Samos, why do you joke and gape at me? You shouldn't consider my appearance but examine my wits. It's ridiculous to find fault with a man's intelligence because of the way he looks. Many men of the worst appearance have a sound mind. No one, then, should criticize the mind, which he hasn't seen, of a man whose stature he observes to be inferior. A doctor doesn't give up a sick man as soon as he sees him, but he feels his pulse and then judges his condition. When did anyone decide on a jar of wine by looking at it rather than by taking a taste? The Muse is judged in the theater and Aphrodite in bed. Just so, wit is judged in words'. So, when the Samians found that what he said didn't jibe with his appearance, they said to one another, 'A clever fellow, by the Muses, with a real gift for speaking'. And they shouted to him, 'All right, interpret'. When Aesop saw that he had their favor, he seized on this opportunity to speak freely and began. (tr. Daly)
>
> οἱ δὲ Σάμιοι, ἰδόντες τὸν Αἴσωπον καὶ γελάσαντες, ἐπεφώνουν 'ἀχθήτω ἄλλος σημειολύτης, ἵνα τοῦτο τὸ σημεῖον διαλύσηται. τὸ τέρας τῆς ὄψεως αὐτοῦ! βάτραχός ἐστιν, ὗς τροχάζων, ἢ στάμνος κήλην ἔχων, ἢ πιθήκων πριμιπιλάριος, ἢ λαγυνίσκος εἰκαζόμενος, ἢ μαγείρου σκευοθήκη, ἢ κύων ἐν γυργάθῳ'. ὁ δὲ Αἴσωπος ἀκούων ἀμυκτηρίστως, ἡσυχίαν ἑαυτῷ κτησάμενος ἤρξατο λέγειν οὕτως· 'ἄνδρες Σάμιοι, ⟨τί σκώπτετε⟩ ἀτενήσαντες εἰς ἐμέ; οὐχὶ τὴν ὄψιν δεῖ θεωρεῖν, ἀλλὰ τὴν φρόνησιν σκοπεῖν. ἄτοπον γάρ ἐστιν ἀνθρώπου ψέγειν τὸν νοῦν διὰ τὸ διάπλασμα τοῦ τύπου. πολλοὶ γὰρ μορφὴν κακίστην ἔχοντες νοῦν ἔχουσι σώφρονα. μηδεὶς οὖν ἰδὼν τὸ μέγεθος ἐλαττούμενον ἀνθρώπου ἃ οὐ τεθεώρηκεν μεμφέσθω, τὸν νοῦν. οὐ γὰρ ἰατρὸς τὸν νοσοῦντα ἀφήλπισεν ἰδών, ἀλλὰ τὴν ἀφὴν ψηλαφήσας τὴν δύναμιν ἐπέγνω. τὸν πίθον κατανοήσας, γεῦμα δὲ ἐξ αὐτοῦ μὴ λαβών, πότε γνώσῃ; ἡ Μοῦσα κρίνεται ἐν θεάτροις, ἐν δὲ κοιτῶσιν Κύπρις· οὕτω καὶ

> φρόνησις ἐν λόγοις'. οὐχ εὑρόντες οὖν οἱ Σάμιοι τὰ λεγόμενα ὅμοια τῇ ὄψει πρὸς ἀλλήλους ἔλεγον 'κομψός, νὴ τὰς Μούσας, καὶ δυνάμενος εἰπεῖν'. ἐπεφώνουν δὲ αὐτῷ 'θάρσει, διάλυε'. Αἴσωπος ἐπιγνοὺς ἑαυτὸν ἐπαινούμενον, παρρησίας λαβὼν καιρὸν ἤρξατο λέγειν.

The Samians mock Aesop and joke that they now need a 'second interpreter' (ἄλλος σημειολύτης) to grapple with the bizarre-looking fabulist: they call him a σημεῖον ('portent') and a τέρας ('monstrosity'). It is worth noting in connection with these terms that Croesus, at *Vita G* 98, screams out 'αἴνιγμα' ('riddle!') when he first lays eyes on Aesop.[27] For the Samians, Aesop is a kind of walking fable, a figure who, it turns out, conceals some kind of truth under a false façade and himself stands in need of interpretation. The Samians compare Aesop to a series of non-humans: 'Is he a frog, or a hedgehog, or a potbellied jar, or a captain of monkeys, or a moulded jug, or a cook's gear, or a dog in a basket?' These comparisons suggest connections between Aesop's appearance and the type of figures that traditionally populate his stories. Aesop responds by asking the Samians to listen to his words, rather than judge him by his 'face' (ὄψις). Echoing the words of the fox (above), Aesop remarks that many men of the 'worst appearance' (μορφὴ κακίστη) have a 'sound mind' (νοῦς σώφρων). Aesop continues with a series of illustrations of this point: doctors don't decide on the health of a patient by how he looks, they examine him; one should taste a wine to judge it, not just look at the bottle: φρόνησις ἐν λόγοις 'wit is judged in words'.

It is worth tracing out the dynamics of Aesop's interaction with the Samians. The Samians' initial reaction consists of laughter, mockery, and rejection; then Aesop speaks and claims: 'It's ridiculous to find fault with a man's intelligence because of the way he looks' (ἄτοπον γάρ ἐστιν ἀνθρώπου ψέγειν τὸν νοῦν διὰ τὸ διάπλασμα τοῦ τύπου). The Samians eventually concede that Aesop is indeed clever ('κομψός, νὴ τὰς Μούσας, καὶ δυνάμενος εἰπεῖν') and they permit him to speak. Finally, Aesop takes advantage of the opportunity to speak freely and begins (παρρησίας λαβὼν καιρὸν ἤρξατο λέγειν). The Samians learn from Aesop only after they have (1) rejected him for his ugliness, and (2) discovered that wisdom can be found even under the worst exteriors (οὐχ εὑρόντες οὖν οἱ Σάμιοι τὰ λεγόμενα ὅμοια τῇ ὄψει).

[27] We know from Theon's *Progymnasmata* 3.73 that, in the first century CE, at least, the term αἴνιγμα was used as a kind of equivalent to αἶνος to refer to the genre of Aesopic fable; cf. also van Dijk 1997, 81 and Compton 1990, 347.

4. *The price of Aesop*

The bulk of the narrative of the *Life of Aesop* (*Vita G* 28–90) is devoted to Aesop's often contentious conversations with his master, the famous philosopher Xanthus. In these exchanges the insubordinate Aesop frequently outwits Xanthus, repeatedly embarrassing the well-known teacher before the eyes of his students. On one such occasion, after Aesop has prepared (for the second night in a row) a dinner consisting entirely of pigs' tongues, one of Xanthus' students comments, 'Like body, like mind. This abusive and malicious slave isn't worth a penny' (οἵα γὰρ ἡ μορφὴ αὐτοῦ τοιαύτη καὶ ἡ ψυχὴ αὐτοῦ. φιλολοίδορος καὶ κακεντρεχὴς δοῦλος οὗτος· ὀβολοῦ ἄξιος οὐκ ἔστιν, *Vita G* 55). This comment exposes the student to ridicule and provides Aesop with an opportunity to rebuke and instruct both student and master: the student ought to mind his own business and Xanthus ought to be more precise and explicit when ordering his dinner (*Vita G* 55). At the same time, the way in which Xanthus' student couples his reflections on Aesop's appearance with a dismissive reference to his monetary value (ὀβολοῦ ἄξιος οὐκ ἔστιν) represents a persistent theme of the *Life*: Aesop's ugliness not only demands a response, it also seems specifically to call out for such appraisals. As a slave, Aesop is, after all, a commodity, and he is bought and sold twice in the early stages of the story (*Vita G* 11–28). In these passages Aesop's ugliness plays a key role in determinations of his price, which, in both purchases, is measly and punctuated with mockery. These episodes on the auction block play out as object lessons in how to look beneath the surface, as buyers and bystanders debate the likelihood that such an ugly slave could be worth anything at all and, after catching a glimpse of Aesopic wit, come to terms in order to settle on a price.

On the very same day that Aesop is granted the gift of speech by the goddess Isis, the overseer of Aesop's field, a man called Zenas, immediately perceives that a talking Aesop will be a great nuisance and so decides to do what he can to get rid of him. Zenas lies and tells the master that Aesop is slandering him and ought to be sold off, and the question of Aesop's market value surfaces for the first time (*Vita G* 11):

> The master was shaken by this and said to Zenas, 'Go sell him'. Zenas said, 'Are you joking, master? Don't you know how unsightly he is? Who will want to buy him and have a baboon instead of a man?' The master said, 'Well then, give him to someone. And if no one wants to take him, beat him to death'. (tr. Daly)

> ὁ δὲ κινηθεὶς λέγει τῷ Ζηνᾷ ‘πορεύου, πώλησον αὐτόν’. ὁ δὲ Ζηνᾶς· ‘παίζεις, δέσποτα; οὐκ οἶδας αὐτοῦ τὴν ἀμορφίαν; τίς αὐτὸν θελήσει ἀγοράσαι καὶ κυνοκέφαλον ἀντὶ ἀνθρώπου ἔχειν;’ ὁ δεσπότης· ‘ἄπελθε τοιγαροῦν, χάρισαι αὐτόν τινι. εἰ δὲ μηδεὶς θέλει λαβεῖν αὐτόν, δέρων ἀπόκτεινον αὐτόν’.

Zenas remarks that Aesop looks more like an animal than a man,[28] adding that Aesop's ἀμορφία will make him difficult to sell, while the δεσπότης, for his part, does not care whether Aesop lives or dies. Contrary to Zenas' prediction, Aesop is subsequently bought and sold on two occasions (first Zenas sells him to a slave dealer, then the dealer in turn sells him to Xanthus the philosopher). Although Aesop's ugliness leads observers throughout the narrative to assume that he is completely worthless, the scenes in which Aesop is treated explicitly as a commodity (*Vita G* 11–28) highlight the significance of the process of closely evaluating Aesop's ugliness and of discovering what (if anything) lies underneath his hideous exterior. In each transaction, the buyer initially rejects Aesop because of his appearance, but then is convinced by his witty comments to buy him. It is essential to note, however, that, in both sales, even after the buyer is convinced of Aesop's utility, Aesop is not sold for any substantial profit. In the first sale, Zenas says 'give me whatever you will' (δὸς ὃ θέλεις, *Vita G* 15) and we learn only that the dealer paid ὀλίγον τι ('just a little something'). In the second, the dealer ends up selling Aesop to Xanthus the philosopher at cost after first offering him up for free ἑξήκοντα δηναρίων τοῦτον ἠγόρακα, πεποίηκεν δὲ δαπάνας δέκα πέντε· ἴσωσόν μοι ἀπ' αὐτοῦ, 'I bought him for sixty denarii, and he's cost me fifteen in expenses. Pay me what he has cost', *Vita G* 27).

The slave dealer's initial reaction to Aesop is as follows (*Vita G* 14–15):

> As the slave dealer turned to Aesop and saw what *a piece of human garbage* he appeared to be, he said, 'This must be the trumpeter in the battle of the cranes. Is he a turnip or a man? If he didn't have a voice, I would have said he was a pot or a jar for food or a goose egg. Zenas, I think you've treated me pretty shabbily. I could have been home already. But no, you had to drag me off as though you had something worthwhile to sell instead of *this refuse*'. So saying, he started away. (15) As he went, Aesop caught him by the tail of his cloak and said, 'Listen'. But the

[28] The comparison to the κυνοκέφαλος ('dog-headed baboon') is the first in a series of responses to Aesop's appearance that involve likening him to animals or otherwise contrasting him with humans; compare, too, Bentley's observation (p. 66 above) that the Aesop of the *Life* resembles 'some strange Beast introduced in the Fables'.

merchant said, 'Let me go. I wish you no luck. Why do you call me back?' Aesop said, 'Why did you come here?' And he replied, 'On account of you. To buy you'. 'Well then', said Aesop, 'why don't you buy me?' The merchant said, 'Don't bother me. I don't want to buy you'. Aesop: 'Buy me, sir, and by Isis, I'll be very useful to you'. Slave dealer: 'And how can you be useful to me that I should change my mind and buy you?' Aesop: 'Don't you have any undisciplined fellows in your slave market who are always asking for food?' Slave dealer: 'Yes'. Aesop: 'Buy me and make me their trainer. They'll be afraid of my ugly face and will stop acting so unruly'. Slave dealer: 'A fine idea, by your dubious origin!' And turning to Zenas, the dealer said, '*How much do you want for this sad specimen?*' 'Give me three obols', said Zenas. Slave dealer: 'No fooling, how much?' Zenas: '*Give me whatever you will*'. The slave dealer *offered a trifle* and bought him. (tr. Daly)

ἐπιστραφεὶς δὲ ὁ σωματέμπορος θεωρεῖ τὸν Αἴσωπον τοιουτόμορφον *ἀπόμαγμα* καὶ λέγει 'οὗτος τῆς γερανομαχίας σαλπιστής ἐστιν. οὗτος ῥιζοκάλαμός ἐστιν ἢ ἄνθρωπος; οὗτος εἰ μὴ φωνὴν εἶχεν, εἰρήκειν ἂν ὅτι ἢ χυτρόπους ἐστὶν ἢ ἀγγεῖον τροφῆς ἢ χηνὸς ᾠόν. Ζηνᾶ, μέμφομαί σοι. τί δυνάμενόν με ἤδη τὰ τῆς ὁδοιπορίας ἐκτε⟨τε⟩λεκέναι [με] περιέσπασας, ὡς ἔχων τι ἀγαθὸν πωλῆσαι, καὶ οὐ *περικάθαρμα*;' καὶ ταῦτα εἰπὼν ἐπορεύετο. (15) πορευομένου δὲ αὐτοῦ ὁ Αἴσωπος ἐξ ἀναβολῆς τοῦ ἱματίου εἵλκυσεν καί φησιν 'ἄκουσον'. ὁ δὲ ἔμπορος εἶπεν 'ἄφες. μηδέν σοι τῶν ἀγαθῶν γενήσεται. τί με μετεκαλέσω;' ὁ δὲ Αἴσωπός φησιν 'ἕνεκα τίνος ἐνθάδε ἦλθες;' ὁ δέ· 'ἕνεκεν σοῦ, ἵνα σε ἀγοράσω'. ὁ Αἴσωπος 'διὰ τί οὖν', φησίν, 'οὐκ ἀγοράζεις με;' ὁ ἔμπορος· '⟨μὴ⟩ περίθες μοι πρᾶγμα, ὅτι οὐ θέλω σε ἀγοράσαι'. Αἴσωπος· 'ἀγόρασόν με, ἄνθρωπε, καὶ μὰ τὴν Ἶσιν πολύ σε ὠφελήσω'. ὁ σωματέμπορος· 'καὶ τί με ἔχεις ὠφελῆσαι, ἵνα ἐφ' ἐλπίδι ἐξαπατηθεὶς ἀγοράσω σε;' ὁ Αἴσωπος· 'οὐκ ἔχεις ἐν τῷ σωματεμπορίῳ σου παιδία τινὰ ἀπαιδεύτιστα καὶ τροφὴν αἰτοῦντα παρ' ἕκαστα;' ὁ σωματέμπορος· 'ναί'. ὁ Αἴσωπος· 'ἀγόρασόν με καὶ ποίησόν με ἐκείνων παιδαγωγόν· φοβούμενοι γάρ μου τὴν κακοπινὴν ὄψιν παύσονται τῆς προνικότητος'. ὁ σωματέμπορος· 'ὡραίως ἐπενόησας, μὰ τὴν σκοτίαν σου'. ἐπιστραφεὶς δὲ ὁ σωματέμπορος λέγει τῷ Ζηνᾷ '*πόσον τὸ κακὸν τοῦτο πωλεῖς*;' Ζηνᾶς λέγει 'φέρε τριώβολον'. ὁ σωματέμπορος· 'ὅμως πόσου;' Ζηνᾶς· '*δὸς ὃ θέλεις*'. δοὺς δὲ *ὀλίγον τι* ὁ σωματέμπορος ἠγόρακεν αὐτόν.

There are two words for 'trash' here: ἀπόμαγμα, which refers to the dirt that is washed off when something has been wiped clean; and περικάθαρμα, which can also refer to that which is thrown away in cleansing. Both words have religious connotations, which imply that Aesop looks like some kind of expiation.[29] Reactions to Aesop's appearance are thus

[29] Bremmer 1983, 301–304, explains the use of such words as terms of abuse by pointing to evidence for the use of ugly members of the community in scapegoat rituals in the Greek world.

semantically linked to his ritualized execution as a type of φαρμακός-figure, which occurs at Delphi in the final chapter of the *Life*.[30] The slave dealer, who was hoping for 'something good' or 'worthwhile' (τι ἀγαθόν), instead of something that resembles garbage, does not at first believe that Aesop is even a human being: 'Is he a turnip (ῥιζοκάλαμος) or a man (ἄνθρωπος)?' Just as the slave dealer is about to walk off, Aesop interrupts and insists that he can indeed be useful (πολύ σε ὠφελήσω); he convinces the slave dealer that he will strike fear into the hearts of the other slaves (φοβούμενοι), claiming that his 'ugly face' (κακοπινὴς ὄψις) will prevent unruly behavior. Pleased enough with that prospect, the dealer turns to Zenas and asks: πόσου τὸ κακὸν τοῦτο πωλεῖς; 'How much do you want for this bad specimen?' While Zenas identifies just enough value to warrant paying a little something (ὀλίγον τι) for Aesop, Aesop for his part does not deny that he is ugly, nor does he claim to offer anything more than his appearance portends. Rather, he defends his value by claiming for his ugliness a small, farcical utility.

The second time Aesop is sold, to the philosopher Xanthus, the scene plays out along very similar lines. The slave dealer is advised that the only place to unload a slave like Aesop is on Samos, where there is plenty of money and demand is high. Once there, Aesop is put on the auction block between two young, handsome slaves. Nothing can be done to improve Aesop's appearance (*Vita G* 21):

> But he couldn't cover up or prettify Aesop, since he was a completely misshapen pot, and so he dressed him in a sackcloth robe, tied a strip of material around his middle, and stood him between the two handsome slaves. When the auctioneer began to announce the sale, many noticed them and said, '*Bah, these fellows look fine enough, but where did this awful thing come from? He spoils their appearance, too. Take him away*'. Though many made cutting remarks, Aesop stood fast and didn't turn a hair. (tr. Daly)

> τοῦ δὲ Αἰσώπου μηδὲν δυνάμενος καλύψαι ἢ κοσμῆσαι, ἐπείπερ ἦν ὅλος ἁμάρτημα χύσεων, ἐνέδυσεν αὐτὸν σάκκον χιτῶνα, καὶ λακινάριον αὐτὸν ὑποζώσας μέσον αὐτὸν τῶν καλῶν ἔστησεν. τοῦ δὲ κήρυκος τὰ σωμάτια

[30] For links between Aesop's experience at Delphi and scapegoat rituals, see Wiechers 1961, 31–36; Nagy 1979, 279–282; Bremmer 1983, 308; Parker 1983, 260; and Kurke 2003. See now Compton 2006, 19–40. It is worth noting some parallels between these passages and the scenes at Delphi: Aesop's aggressive behavior at Delphi is, after all, initially triggered by the Delphians' refusal to pay him for his wise words. The Delphians (1) first listen to and learn from Aesop, and (2) then undervalue his wisdom by refusing to pay him for it (*Vita G* 124ff.).

> κηρύττοντος πολλοὶ κατενόουν, καὶ ἔλεγον '*οὐᾶ, οὗτοι καλλίοψοι, τὸ δὲ κακὸν τοῦτο πόθεν; οὗτος καὶ τούτους ἀφανίζει. ἆρον ἀπ' αὐτῶν τὸν μέσον*'. πολλῶν οὖν σκοπούντων ὁ Αἴσωπος ἕστηκεν μὴ πτυρόμενος.

The scene draws two different reactions from onlookers: first, the crowd asks for him to be removed from the stand: 'Bah, these fellows look fine enough (καλλίοψοι), but where did this awful thing come from? (τὸ δὲ κακὸν τοῦτο πόθεν;)' The crowd thinks that Aesop's ugliness takes away (ἀφανίζει) from the beauty of the others. When Xanthus arrives, he offers a more 'philosophical' interpretation (*Vita G* 23):

> You see, this man had two handsome boys and one ugly one. He put the ugly one between the handsome ones in order that his ugliness should make their beauty noticeable, for if the ugliness were not set in contrast to that which is superior to it, the appearance of the handsome ones would not have been put to the test. (tr. Daly)
>
> οὗτος γὰρ ἔχων μὲν δύο παῖδας καλοὺς καὶ τὸν ἕνα σαπρόν, ⟨ἔστησε μέσον τῶν καλῶν τὸν σαπρόν⟩, ἵνα τὸ τούτου αἰσχρὸν τὸ τούτων κάλλος ἐκφαίνῃ· εἰ μὴ γὰρ παρετέθη τὸ αἰσχρὸν τῷ κρείττονι, ἡ τῶν καλῶν εἴδησις οὐκ ⟨ἂν⟩ ἠλέγχετο.

Aesop is granted an impromptu interview and impresses the philosopher and his followers with his claims to know nothing (the handsome slaves say they know everything) (*Vita G* 25):

> Hey! He's wonderful. These fellows' answers were no good. No man alive knows everything. That's why he said he knew nothing. That's why he laughed. (tr. Daly)
>
> οὐᾶ, μακάριος· οὗτοι γὰρ κακῶς ἀπεκρίθησαν. ἄνθρωπος γὰρ οὐκ ἔστιν πάντα εἰδώς. διὰ τοῦτο εἶπεν οὗτος ὅτι οὐδὲν οἶδα, διὰ τοῦτο οὖν ἐγέλασεν.

Aesop is ready with quick, witty responses to any question thrown at him: (e.g. 'Where are you from?' 'My mother's belly'. 'No, where were you born?' 'Probably the bedroom, but maybe the dining room'). In the ensuing exchange, Aesop compares his body to the outside of a jar of wine (*Vita G* 26–27):

> Xanthus: 'All that you say is understandable in a man, but *you* are deformed'. Aesop: 'Don't look at my appearance, but examine my soul'. Xanthus: 'What is appearance?' Aesop: 'It's like what often happens when we go to a wine shop to buy wine. The jars we see are ugly, but the wine tastes good'. Xanthus complimented him on his pat answers and went over to the merchant. 'How much', he asked, 'are you selling this one for?' (tr. Daly)

> ὁ Ξάνθος· ‘ὅσα μὲν οὖν λέγεις ἀνθρώπινα, ἀλλὰ σαπρὸς[31] εἶ’. ὁ Αἴσωπος· ‘μή μου βλέπε τὸ εἶδος, ἀλλὰ μᾶλλον ἐξέταζε τὴν ψυχήν’. ὁ Ξάνθος· ‘τί ἐστιν τὸ εἶδος;’ ὁ Αἴσωπος· ‘ὅ τι πολλάκις εἰς οἰνοπώλιον παραγενάμενος ὠνήσασθαι οἶνον· θεωροῦμεν κεράμια ἀειδῆ, τῷ δὲ γεύματι χρηστά’. ὁ Ξάνθος ἐπαινέσας αὐτοῦ τὸ ἕτοιμον τῶν λόγων προσελθὼν τῷ ἐμπόρῳ λέγει ‘τοῦτον πόσου πωλεῖς;’[32]

Physical badness can detract from what is beautiful and it can also serve as a foil to the beautiful, enhancing its effects. In Aesop's case, as he himself insists, his ugliness serves a third function: his is a kind of *heuristic* ugliness, a prompt or goad to look beyond the surface and to try to draw meaning out from under the veil of appearance (εἶδος).

Aesop's ugliness, which, we have seen, functions as a kind of provocation and (he insists) as a false indicator of his value, links him to various other figures in the crowded field of misshapen truth-speakers, scoundrels, poets, and intellectuals produced by the Greek imagination. A few recent studies have successfully brought to light important points of contact between Aesop and, for example, Homer's Thersites

[31] One of the adjectives used most consistently to describe Aesop throughout the *Life*, σαπρός (related to σήπω, ‘to make rotten, to cause to rot’; cf. e.g. *Vita G* 1, 2, 10, 16, 23, 29, 37), is again contrasted with the quality of being human.

[32] These passages, in which Xanthus analyzes Aesop's ugliness and describes in general how ugliness functions in relation to beauty, find striking parallels in the response to Socrates' ugliness offered by the physiognomist Zopyrus, the titular character in a fragmentary Socratic dialogue written by Phaedo (see especially Kahn 1996, 9ff.). Zopyrus, who claims to be able to describe anyone's nature by observing their appearance (cf. Cic. *Tusc.* 4.80), looks over Socrates and concludes that he is a stupid, brutish womanizer. When the philosopher's friends laugh and dismiss the physiognomist's interpretation, Socrates defends the diagnosis, explaining that he is, by nature, all of those things that Zopyrus has taken him for, but that he has overcome his most base characteristics by means of the practice of philosophy. Like Socrates, Aesop provokes a ‘philosophical’ response because of his ugliness and he, too, must step in to explain the *real* meaning of his ugliness. Two important differences, however, stand out: first, whereas Socrates shows Zopyrus' interpretation to be right, and thus silences his friends' mockery of the magus, Aesop bluntly corrects Xanthus, instructing the Samian philosopher and his students not to look at appearance (εἶδος) *at all.* Second, and perhaps more importantly, in his conversation with Zopyrus it seems that Socrates used his own ugliness as an example of the power of nurture over nature and, by extension, as proof of the beneficence of philosophy; Aesop, on the other hand, merely demands not to be judged by his appearance (μή μου βλέπε τὸ εἶδος, ἀλλὰ μᾶλλον ἐξέταζε τὴν ψυχήν) because appearances are unreliable (ὁ Ξάνθος· ‘τί ἐστιν τὸ εἶδος;’ ὁ Αἴσωπος· ‘ὅ τι πολλάκις εἰς οἰνοπώλιον παραγενάμενος ὠνήσασθαι οἶνον· θεωροῦμεν κεράμια ἀειδῆ, τῷ δὲ γεύματι χρηστά’.) Put another way, Socrates seems to incorporate his ugliness and interpretations thereof into a broader agenda, while Aesop's moral lessons in this case teach only that appearance is unreliable, a false indicator of real value, and that true meaning lies underneath the surface.

and the poet Hipponax.[33] The most obvious comparison is with the Platonic and Xenophontic Socrates and his Silenus-like appearance, the effects of which were most famously described at Plato's *Symposium* 216d–217a.[34] Alcibiades' speech in praise of Socrates emphasizes the contrast between exterior and interior and between appearance and reality (Plato *Symp.* 216d5–7):

> It is *an outward casing* he wears, similar to the sculptured Silenus. But if you opened *his inside*, you cannot imagine, my companions, how full of moderation he is.
>
> τοῦτο γὰρ οὗτος *ἔξωθεν* περιβέβληται, ὥσπερ ὁ γεγλυμμένος σιληνός· *ἔνδοθεν* δὲ ἀνοιχθεὶς πόσης οἴεσθε γέμει, ὦ ἄνδρες συμπόται, σωφροσύνης;

Alcibiades and Aesop would undoubtedly agree on the falsity of εἶδος. Like Alcibiades, Aesop insists that it is what is inside that matters. Important differences between Socrates and Aesop emerge, however, if we go one step further and ask, *What is inside*? For Alcibiades, the answer is clear (Plato *Symp.* 217a1–2):

> Whether anyone else has caught him in a serious moment and opened him, and seen the images inside, I know not; but I saw them one day, and thought them so divine and golden, so perfectly fair and wondrous, that I simply had to do as Socrates bade me.
>
> σπουδάσαντος δὲ αὐτοῦ καὶ ἀνοιχθέντος οὐκ οἶδα εἴ τις ἑώρακεν τὰ ἐντὸς ἀγάλματα· ἀλλ' ἐγὼ ἤδη ποτ' εἶδον, καί μοι ἔδοξεν οὕτω θεῖα καὶ χρυσᾶ εἶναι καὶ πάγκαλα καὶ θαυμαστά, ὥστε ποιητέον εἶναι ἔμβραχυ ὅτι κελεύοι Σωκράτης.

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[33] See especially Nagy 1979, 281ff.; on Aesop and Hipponax, see, most recently, Acosta-Hughes and Scodel 2004.

[34] Recent work that explores links between Aesop and Socrates includes Kurke 2006, 23ff.; Lissarague 2000, 136; Zanker 1995, 33–34; Schauer and Merkle 1992; Compton 1990; and Jedrkiewicz 1989, 111–127. Schauer and Merkle offer perhaps the most sober survey of the parallels and differences between Aesop and Socrates, and they also explore the complex question of the 'influence' of Plato on the anonymous author of the *Vita*. They compile numerous parallels between Socrates and Aesop, but point also to important distinctions, particularly in their respective death scenes (Aesop at Delphi and Socrates in Plato's *Phaedo* and *Crito*); they especially see Aesop's aggressive and desperate behavior as markedly different from Socrates' contemplative attitude when faced with imminent execution. Kurke 2006 has recently also emphasized differences between Aesop and Plato's Socrates. While Schauer and Merkle view Plato as both influencing the author of the *Life* and himself drawing on Aesopic traditions, particularly in the *Phaedo*, Kurke pushes the question of influence and directionality (i.e. did Plato influence the author of the *Vita* or did the Aesopic tradition influence Plato?) considerably further, describing 'an occluded Aesopic strand' (8) running through all of Plato's writing.

In the *Life of Aesop*, by rather sharp contrast, Aesop's inner value never receives such high praise. In fact, as we have already seen, even after the discovery of the wit and wisdom that is hidden beneath Aesop's ugly appearance there is a tendency to continue to deride and belittle the fabulist. When Xanthus, impressed by Aesop's sharp comments, decides to buy him, the slave dealer responds (*Vita G* 27):

> 'Are you laughing at my business?' Xanthus: 'How so?' The merchant: 'Well, you've passed up these valuable slaves and gone on to this repulsive piece of human property. Buy one of them and take this one as a gift'. Xanthus: 'Still, how much do you want for him?' The merchant: 'I bought him for sixty denarii, and he's cost me fifteen in expenses. Pay me what he has cost'.
>
> 'ἐπισκῶψαί μου θέλεις τὴν ἐμπορίαν;' ὁ Ξάνθος· 'διὰ τί;' ὁ ἔμπορος· 'ἀλλ' ἀπολιπὼν τούτους τοὺς ἀξίους ἐπὶ τὸ κατάπτυστον τοῦτο ἀνδραπόδιον ἦλθες; ἐξ ἐκείνων ἀγόρασον καὶ λαβὲ τοῦτον ἐπιθήκην'. ὁ Ξάνθος· 'ὅμως πόσου τοῦτον;' ὁ ἔμπορος· 'ἑξήκοντα δηναρίων τοῦτον ἠγόρακα, πεποίηκεν δὲ δαπάνας δέκα πέντε· ἴσωσόν μοι ἀπ' αὐτοῦ'.

After Aesop demonstrates his wit and wisdom, the dealer still suspects that Xanthus's interest is just veiled mockery (ἐπισκῶψαι) and he compares 'this repulsive (κατάπτυστον, literally 'to be spat upon') piece of human property' to the more 'valuable' (τούτους τοὺς ἀξίους) slaves on auction. Aesop is thrown in as an add-on (ἐπιθήκη), and the price is just enough to cover expenses.

5. *Conclusion: discovering (some) value in the* Life *of the ugly Fabulist*

The Aesop of the *Life* is heuristically ugly (i.e. the process of discovering that underneath his hideous appearance there is a voice capable of communicating wisdom is the first step in learning from his fable-telling). His ugliness is implicitly didactic from the very first lines of the *Life*, where the reader is told that this 'most beneficent' storyteller is at the same time useless as a slave and one of the ugliest men who ever lived. The appraisals of Aesop we have seen in the *Life* clearly reflect, on some level, the dynamics of fable-telling and fable-interpreting. Like the fables, Aesop presents a strange mixture of animal and human characteristics, comically thrown together in a small package that calls out for interpretation. In the *Life of Aesop*, to receive Aesop's wisdom at all (i.e. to agree to listen to him speak) means *already* to have accepted that the bad-looking fabulist is not *all* bad.

But while Aesop indeed seems to overcome his physical badness as he gains an international reputation for his wisdom, the *meanings* that are drawn out of his body and words remain, somehow, *devalued*. On the one hand, Aesop's ugliness is always revealed to be a kind of false λόγος concealing some truth: to reject Aesop for his ugliness is to miss the lesson, in effect, to throw out the Fables with the Fabulist. But, on the other hand, even those who listen to and learn from the fabulist persist in ridiculing and insulting him. The impulse to reject the ugly Aesop not only provides a framework for several passages throughout the narrative of the *Life*, it also points to significant links between ugliness and reception: in the *Life* itself and at points in its critical history, to dismiss Aesop for his ugliness is tantamount to a refusal to hear his stories. The parallels with the reception of the text of the *Life of Aesop* are striking: likened to 'Penny Merriments' printed at London Bridge and thrown out by Richard Bentley in 1697 for both the ugliness of the hero and the bad quality of its Greek; rediscovered in the 1930s in a Manhattan library; and celebrated by recent critics for the very features that made it so easy to athetize in the eighteenth century (i.e. its low-brow, 'popular' nature), the *Life of Aesop*, and its repeated emphases on the relationship between ugliness and value, is a text that in many ways anticipates and thematizes its own reception. To read it at all is already to have accepted its condition—and its essential badness.

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CHAPTER FOUR

BEETLE TRACKS: ENTOMOLOGY, SCATOLOGY AND THE DISCOURSE OF ABUSE

Deborah Steiner

1. *Introduction*

In a fragment of Semonides preserved by later commentators and grammarians, the iambographer declares the *kantharos* or dung beetle the creature that 'leads the worst (κάκιστον) way of life' (fr. 13 W). Greek proverbial lore reiterates the point in different form: 'a beetle will produce honey sooner than you will produce anything good'.[1] This chapter explores some of the byways of ancient myth and entomology in order to illustrate how Greek sources from archaic through to imperial times deploy the 'baseness' (in several of the senses that contributions to this volume assign to the term) characteristic of the insect for their literary and thematic ends. As I argue, authors introduce the zoologically lowly *kantharos* in order to signal their embrace of styles of speech (chiefly mockery, invective and scatology) and genres that belong to the correspondingly lowest rungs of the literary hierarchy, and, on occasion, to subvert or debase the symbols and conceits found in the 'higher' modes of discourse.[2] As several texts explored here additionally suggest, the insect appears particularly suited to their authors' interrogations of the properties and origins of these linguistically, morally and

[1] Cited in Strömberg 1954, 20. The proverb seems in part to derive from the insect's supposed antipathy to sweet smells, that of honey included. For this, see the sources cited in Davies and Kathirithamby 1986, 65.

[2] On the question of the archaic and classical poetic sources' observance of 'unwritten laws' determining generic registers and issues of linguistic propriety, see Rossi 1971. As Kurke 2006, 8 more recently remarks, 'among the forms of poetry [in ancient Greece], there existed a clear hierarchy of elaboration of performance, style, and level of decorum that descended from Homeric epic and choral lyric at the top to monodic lyric, elegy, and finally iambic poetry'. I will return to this generic 'ladder' at several points.

sociopolitically 'base' genres,[3] and may even stand emblem for the figure of the iambographer or mocker in a scene. My argument follows a chiefly chronological trajectory, which aims both to reconstruct the literary genealogy of the *kantharos* and to demonstrate what lies behind a particular source's insertion of the animal into a text. More broadly, my aim is to examine the logic of association that may underpin the connection between the beetle and the exchanges of calumny and abuse that so regularly frame its appearances. This, I propose, depends at least in part on the links Greek poetics regularly establishes between deviant appetites and diets and acts of verbal mockery and defamation.

2. *Fable and archaic* iambos

I begin with the narrative mode which may have first accommodated the beetle and which would continue to inform its presence in several other genres.[4] The insect figures on a handful of occasions in the Aesopic corpus (*Aes.* 3, 84, 107, 112 Perry), either alone or in polemical pairing with another animal. Because there is no secure way of dating the *ainoi*, although many of them were demonstrably already circulating in archaic times, my purpose in reviewing the stories is not to assign priority to Aesop's representations of the insect in each and every instance.[5] Instead the fables would have served as repositories of already existing notions concerning the distinctive ethical profile and activities of the beetle even as they would influence depictions of the creature in contemporary and later accounts.

Perhaps most notorious is the beetle featured in a story included both in the Aesopic *Vitae* tradition and in the collections of fables that existed independent of the biographies. The tale of the eagle and dung beetle is preserved in somewhat different versions in Aesop 3 Perry, S^{RV} 129–130, and *Vit. Aesop* GW 135–139 Perry, and my retelling will include the several variations the different sources offer.[6] A dung beetle

[3] For the last element, see Kurke 2006 and n. 13.

[4] While commonly described as a 'genre', the term is something of a misnomer when applied to the fable. More properly it is a rhetorical device that can be included in any number of other genres and exists in both poetry and prose.

[5] Even assigning the fables to Aesop is, of course, problematic. The traditions surrounding the fabulist first appear only in fifth-century sources, and the first collection of the *ainoi* dates to ca. 300 BCE.

[6] Van Dijk 1997, 149–150 and 205 offers a handy summary of all the appearances of

has been injured by an eagle, which either ate its young or destroyed its eggs or, most usually, consumed a hare that, seeking to escape the eagle's pursuit, had sought asylum with the insect. In retaliation, the beetle tracked the eagle higher and higher, breaking its eggs wherever it chanced to lay them. Eventually the bird flew up to Zeus, who allowed it to nest in his lap. But the beetle pursued its enemy up to heaven and either deposited a dung ball on Zeus, or simply buzzed about his head. In order to rid himself of the pest and/or the unseemly mess on his clothes, Zeus, forgetful of the nest, rose from his seat. The eagle's eggs fell to the ground where they shattered.

While in the fable collection the story carries an aetiological tag, explaining why eagles lay their eggs in a season when beetles are not about, when embedded within the Aesopic *Vitae* it has an explicitly monitory purpose, already very familiar to late-fifth-century audiences and perhaps current in still earlier times. Aesop, having been accused by the Delphians on a trumped-up charge of having stolen a vessel sacred to Apollo, is being led to death and takes refuge in a shrine of the Muses (or Apollo's). Confronted with his pursuers who fail to respect his sanctuary, he tells this story as they attempt to drag him off to the cliff where he will die.[7] The three figures in the story neatly correspond to the aggressors and their victim. Most obviously the Delphians about to eject Aesop from the sacred space are represented by the hybristic eagle that disregards the hare's refuge and its sacrosanct suppliant status. The hare figures Aesop, even down to the death that will be the common fate of both. But the dung beetle plays a double role. It stands at once for the anonymous future avengers of whom the aggressors, whether eagle or Delphians, should beware, and also for Aesop; despite the fabulist's seemingly helpless and humble position in the face of his more powerful antagonists, he too will, albeit posthumously and through the agency of others, punish those who scorn him.[8] The Del-

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the fable outside the Aesopic repertoire and documents the variations in the tale; so too Olson 1998, xxxiv–xxxv.

[7] For the ancient sources for the story, see van Dijk 1997, 196 n. 61.

[8] On the theme of revenge, and its possibly historical implications, see Wiechers 1961. In the event, it will be Zeus who brings about the punishment of the Delphians, and in a way that the *ainos* anticipates. Just as Zeus is the unwitting agent of the destruction of the eagle's eggs, so he is author of the plague that comes on the Delphians; and just as the beetle gains its end by appealing directly to Zeus Xenios, so, *Vita* G 142 reports, the oracle directing the Delphians to propitiate the death of Aesop so as to be delivered from the plague comes in unmediated fashion from Zeus.

phians should learn from the story that even the lowliest creature can achieve revenge when wronged, and a seeming affiliation with a god, such as the eagle enjoyed with Zeus and the Delphians do with Apollo, does the miscreant no lasting good. The relevance of both the fable's themes and its narrative context for the practice of mockery and abuse is something to which I will return.

But first another dung-beetle tale in the Aesopic repertoire. Included in Perry's collection as number 112, it is the story of the *kantharos* and the ant. Here an ant, as suits its proverbially provident and hard-working character, is gathering grain for the winter, prompting the idle beetle to wonder at its industry at a time of year when all other animals are taking things easy. Come winter, the beetle has nothing to eat and, very hungry, goes to ask the ant for help. 'Beetle,' responds the ant, 'if you had labored at the time when I was taking pains and you insulted (ὠνείδιζες) me, you wouldn't be lacking food now'. The story exists in an alternate and more famous version, where the cicada takes the beetle's place (373 Perry). The two otherwise parallel fables part company at one critical point. Instead of idling its time away, the cicada has been engaged in its characteristic role as producer of song, later protesting to the ant that it did not have occasion to gather food because it was 'singing melodiously'. The divergence may be suggestive for my theme: idleness and insulting speech belong to the beetle while the cicada figures in what was already its common archaic role as a generator of sweet, if in this instance non-productive song.

The material found in the Aesopic collection appears on several occasions in archaic iambic poetry, an overlap not surprising in view of the larger affinities between the fable and *iambos*. Three general points of continuity discussed by recent scholars will prove particularly relevant to the *kantharos* within the iambic tradition. First, the *ainos* is well suited to the iambographer's purpose because it seems frequently to offer 'a rhetorical device that a speaker adopts when addressing his interlocutor in a polemical tone and with an aggressive attitude'.[9] Second, both tellers of fables (or the character that plays the starring role in the *ainos*) and the iambographic ego typically occupy a position of seeming social inferiority, powerlessness and abjection *vis-à-vis* a stronger counterpart/addressee, who may have done that individual a prior wrong.[10] And third, both fables and *iambos* seem to share a simi-

[9] I cite from Zanetto 2001, 67; see too Rosen 1988, 32–33.

[10] See Rothwell 1995 for detailed discussion of the lower-class status typical of those

larly 'popular' and even indecorous position among the existing literary modes. *Ainos* is admitted in epic (although never in monodic lyric or elegy) only when prefaced by an apologia on the speaker's part,[11] and while other genres may refer to Aesopic fables, they generally avoid narrating them in full.[12] Moreover, the clear association, in sources from the fifth century on (see Hdt. 2.134, Pl. *Phaedo* 60c9–61d7), between fables and prose as opposed to the 'higher' form of poetry locates the stories at the bottom of the generic and corresponding sociopolitical hierarchy.[13] While scholars continue to debate the function and status of archaic *iambos*,[14] much about its themes, structure, and vocabulary (not least its distinctive scatological bent, graphic sexual language, and the *ad hominem* terms in which it frames its attacks) sets it apart from other contemporary poetic genres.[15] On ideological grounds too, iambic song

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who narrate fables; notoriously, according to Phaedrus 3 pr. 33–40 (cited in Rothwell 1995, 234), the genre was originally 'invented' by slaves.

[11] Hesiod's well-known preface to the fable of the hawk and the nightingale (*Op.* 202), 'Now I will tell a tale for the kings, although they themselves perceive it' (νῦν δ' αἶνον βασιλεῦσ' ἐρέω φρονέουσι καὶ αὐτοῖς), can be read as a piece of favor-winning politesse (and an acknowledgment of one portion of his audience's social/intellectual superiority) that clears the way for what emerges as an indictment of the conduct of the 'kings' within a lowly literary frame. Indeed, the tale is nicely calculated to hold the powerful hawk's behavior up for critique even as it recognizes the bird's superior standing. As Martin 1992, 21–22 additionally argues, this beast fable belongs among the low generic elements that the *Works and Days*, with its self-avowedly 'populist' orientation as opposed to the elitist ideology espoused in the *Theogony*, admits. While most commentators explain Eumaeus' characterization of the story the disguised Odysseus tells him as an *ainos* (*Od.* 14.508) on the grounds that it contains a hidden meaning (Eumaeus should give Odysseus a cloak for the night), this reading ignores the extended and patently self-exculpatory prologue the teller of the tale includes. Announcing that he is about to say something in a spirit of boasting, the 'beggar' adds 'the mad wine bids me. Wine sets even a thoughtful man to singing and to laughing softly … and sometimes brings forth a word that was better unspoken' (*Od.* 14.463–466). The ensuing *ainos*, already framed as 'speaking out of turn', includes the invective and table-turning element visible in other instances of the genre: beginning with a demonstration of the speaker's lack of forethought and abject condition, it shows how he triumphs in the end by virtue of the intervention of a more powerful protector, Odysseus, who turns another character, the usually valiant and heroic Thoas, into his anti-heroic dupe and the target of external derision.

[12] Rothwell 1995, 237.

[13] For a detailed discussion of this point, and the overlap between literary genre and sociopolitical system, see Kurke 2006, esp. 8–9, whose terms I borrow here.

[14] For a recent review of the various accounts given by modern commentators, see Kantzios 2005, 12–20.

[15] While vigorous debate continues on what exactly ancient audiences thought distinctive to archaic *iambos* (see particularly Rotstein, forthcoming), by the fourth century at least Aristotle identifies a type of abusive poetry composed by 'people of

may position itself in a low, or at least 'middling' register; according to Ian Morris' discussion of the Ionian iambographers, their poems were designed in part to articulate critiques of an elitist lifestyle and of the exclusionary politics favored by the practitioners of that mode of conduct.[16]

While iambic song accommodates creatures absent from the Aesopic bestiary, the *kantharos* belongs among those common to both genres. Several commentators would see in the fragment of Semonides cited above the seventh-century poet's deployment of the story of the eagle and dung beetle, and Meuli even assigns the statement 'that insect flew past us which has the basest existence of all living creatures' to Zeus confronted by the bothersome insect buzzing about his head.[17] More recently Karadagli supports the attribution and notes the frequency with which the phrase ὦ κάκιστα ζῷα or some variant thereof appears in fables.[18] The poet might even have introduced this tale of a humble creature's revenge against a seemingly more powerful antagonist in a context similar to that in which Archilochus famously narrated the closely parallel fable of the eagle and fox, which figured as part of his iambic attack against his arch-enemy Lycambes.[19] But West denies the ascription,[20] and van Dijk's exhaustive review of the evidence declares agnosticism the safest course.[21] All we can say for sure is that the dung beetle was one among the several animal protagonists equally at home in the Aesopic corpus and in iambic song.

Although Hipponax alone among the canonical iambographers uses no material recognizably fabular in origin, the *kantharos* appears no less than twice within the extant remains of the poet's work, where the beetle's prime function is to exhibit an attraction to the nether anatomical regions and to the fecal matter produced there. With his focus on the stuff on which the insect feeds and on the sexual acts associated with the part of the body from which the excrement comes,

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lesser standing' in distinction to the nobler sort who compose hymns and encomia (*Po.* 1448b24–1449a5). For discussion, see Bowie 2001, 3–5, West 1974, 25. For detailed analysis of the distinctions in theme, morphology, and language between archaic iambic poetry and elegy, see Kantzios 2005, esp. chs. 2, 3 and 4.

16 Morris 1996, 35–36.

17 Meuli 1954, 738–739.

18 Karadagli 1981, 118–119.

19 See pp. 98–99 for additional parallels between the two *ainoi.*

20 West 1984, 112. See too Bowie 2001, 7.

21 Van Dijk 1997, 149–150.

Hipponax adds a seemingly novel element to the profile the insect already possesses, implicating it in the deviant alimentary and sexual practices on which his poetry likes to dwell. Also new is the refiguring of the *kantharos* not, as in its Aesopic appearances, as an individual protagonist but as part of an outsized swarm.

The frustratingly lacunose fragment 92 W is generally agreed to describe some kind of treatment inflicted on the speaker to cure his impotence.[22] The debilitated individual is thrashed with a fig branch and, if we rely on a description of a seemingly parallel procedure in Petronius' *Satyricon* 138, may have something inserted into his anus that prompts abundant defecation. The smell then attracts a swarm of dung beetles, more than fifty, which proceeds to attack the speaker in an assault that occupies at least five lines of the extant song. Here the poet visualizes the beetles' impact on the body of their victim, figured in the manner of a building or city under attack. Divided into three companies, the insects variously assail two unspecified sites and then the 'doors' or gates of a locale whose name, Pygela, identified by commentators as a town near Ephesus, seems a scatological pun on the anus.[23]

> She spoke in Lydian: 'Faskati krolel,' in Arsish, 'your arse …' and my balls … she thrashed with a fig branch as though (I were a scapegoat) … fastened securely by forked pieces of wood (?) … and (I was caught?) between two torments … On the one side the fig branch … me, descending from above, (and on the other side my arse?) spattering with shit … and my arse-hole stank. Dung beetles came buzzing at the smell, more than fifty of them. Some attacked and struck down (?) … others (whet their teeth?) and others falling upon the doors … of the Arsenal … (tr. Gerber)

> ηὔδα δὲ λυδίζουσα· 'βασ̣κ̣…κρολεα'.
> πυγιστί· 'τὸν πυγ⟨εῶ⟩να παρ['.
> καί μοι τὸν ὄρχιν τῆς φαλ[
> κ]ρ̣άδ̣η συνηλοίησεν ὥσπ̣[ερ φαρμακῷ̣
> .].τ̣οις διοζίοισιν ἐμπεδ̣[
> καὶ δὴ δυοῖσιν ἐν πόνοισ̣[ι
> ἥ τε κράδη με τοὐτέρωθ[εν
> ἄνωθεν ἐμπίπτουσα, κ[
> παραψιδάζων βολβίτωι[
> ὦζεν δὲ λαύρη· κάνθαρο[ι δὲ ῥοιζ⟨έο⟩ντες

[22] For detailed, if highly speculative treatment, see Miralles and Pòrtulas 1988, 90–119. The more standard reading remains that of West 1974, 144.

[23] See Gerber 1999, 423.

ἦλθον κατ᾽ ὀδμὴν πλ⟨έο⟩ν[ες ἢ πεντήκοντα·
τῶν οἱ μὲν ἐμπίπτοντε[ς
κατέβαλον, οἱ δὲ τοὺς οδ..[
οἱ δ᾽ ἐμπεσόντες τὰς θύρα[ς
τοῦ Πυγέλησι[.....]..[
..]ρυσσον οἵα[....]αροιμο[

In the view of many commentators, the description seems highly incongruous, and, as Adrados comments of the insects breaking down the doors, '*ad scarabeos non aptum*'.[24] But incongruity may be the point. Several features of the passage seem designed to put an audience in mind of the martial activity regularly ascribed to Homeric heroes or troops. Pointing towards this reading is the verb ἐμπίπτω, used repeatedly in epic of acts of signal and remarkable courage mounted by an individual fighter or by bodies of soldiers,[25] the different divisions into which the beetles form, and the plural θύρας, evocative of gates to be taken by assault. If the town of Pygela was already a site associated with the Trojan expedition, as it would be in later sources,[26] then Hipponax's transgressions of epic decorum would be all the clearer.

Reinforcing the connection, or travesty, is the Homeric deployment of the figure of an insect swarm, which the epic poet introduces by way of image for large numbers of troops gathered for or engaged in hostile action. Famously in the *Iliad* Homer twice turns to the world of insects to conjure up the grandiose dimension of the Greek force. In the first instance the soldiers marching in their ranks are likened to 'swarms of massed bees issuing ever anew from a hollow rock' (ἠΰτε ἔθνεα εἶσι μελισσάων ἁδινάων, / πέτρης ἐκ γλαφυρῆς αἰεὶ νέον ἐρχομενάων 2.87–88).[27] On the second occasion, the Achaean army is gathered for violent action against their enemy (2.469–473):

As are the many nations of swarming flies
who roam about the sheepfold stall,
in the season of spring when the milk wets the pail,

24 Adrados 1959 *ad loc.*

25 The verb is used in this sense of 'fall upon, attack' seventeen times in Homer (LSJ *s.v.* 2); see particularly *Il.* 16.80–81 where it appears in the context of Achilles' order to Patroclus to 'fall upon' the Trojans so as to stop their attack on the ships; so too Odysseus and Telemachus attack the *promakhoi* at *Od.* 24.526.

26 See Strabo 14.639. The name assigned to the town is also reminiscent, absent one consonant, of the πύργοι ('towers, fortifications') that the attacking army must take by storm.

27 Like the Hipponactean insects that assault different parts of the body, 'some fly in a bunch in this direction and others in that' (αἱ μέν ... αἱ δέ, 2.87–90).

so many did the long-haired Achaeans stand in the plain
against the Trojans, desirous of shattering them.

Ἠΰτε μυιάων ἁδινάων ἔθνεα πολλά
αἵ τε κατὰ σταθμὸν ποιμνήϊον ἠλάσκουσιν
ὥρῃ ἐν εἰαρινῇ ὅτε τε γλάγος ἄγγεα δεύει,
τόσσοι ἐπὶ Τρώεσσι κάρη κομόωντες Ἀχαιοὶ
ἐν πεδίῳ ἵσταντο διαρραῖσαι μεμαῶτες.

If Hipponax's swarm is designed to recall these celebrated Homeric precedents, then his seemingly hyperbolic 'more than fifty' observes the deflationary and 'debunking' impetus visible in many of his nods towards the world of epic;[28] compared with the myriad insects the Homeric landscape can support, his beetle swarm appears comically diminished. A third Homeric simile redeploys the massed insects in more sinister fashion as the Trojans and Achaeans battle over the corpse of Sarpedon, and the men, once more compared to bees who 'thunder about the milk pails', crowd about the body of the fallen warrior (16.641–643). Again the changes Hipponax has rung on the trope follow the logic of demotion and deformation of martial epic that informs this curious song. Turning the simile into a nightmarish reality, the iambographer introduces the whistling (ῥοιζέοντες, a term Homer uses of the 'whizz' of arrows on the Iliadic battlefield; e.g. *Il.* 16.361) dung-eating beetles in the place of the thunderous milk-drinking bees or flies, the malodorous body of the impotent protagonist for the heroic Sarpedon in his death, the low setting where the scene most probably occurs for the fame-conferring battlefield.

Adding to the base tenor of the fragment and its emphatically non-epic coloration is the sexually suggestive nature of the vocabulary. What the insects mount is not an attack on an enemy, the context inspiring the final Homeric example, but a form of pederastic assault on the speaker's body. A line from Aristophanes' *Lysistrata* deploys much

[28] For discussion of some of the moments when Hipponax draws on or parodies Homer, see Degani 1984, 187–205, Rosen 1990. However, where Rosen chiefly emphasizes the affinity between the iambographer and the role played by Odysseus in the *Odyssey*, I would suggest that in at least one of the correspondences that he treats—Odysseus' winning throw in the discus competition among the Phaeacians (*Od.* 8.186–201) and Hipponax's triumph in a throwing competition with a *lekuthos* as reported in the testimonia—Hipponax has deliberately replaced the lofty, martial discus with a thoroughly humdrum, anti-heroic and even, in classical sources, *déclassé* object. For another instance in which Hipponax uses terms associated with martial attack in epic in the context of an inglorious sexual assault, see fr. 70 W.

the same terminology as the semi-chorus of old men proposes to 'fall upon' the gates of the acropolis 'like rams' (ἐς τὴν θύραν κριηδὸν ἐμπέσοιμεν, 309).[29] More apposite still is Aristophanes' equation of the θύρα with a man's anus in a context that preserves Hipponax's concern with fecal matter. At *Eccleziasusae* 316–317 Blepyrus personifies his constipated feces as a 'Coprean fellow' who 'bangs at my doorway' in its attempt to make its way out. Since κρούειν commonly refers to sexual intercourse, frequently of a pederastic kind,[30] the speaker presents himself as simultaneously subject to anal penetration from without. Henderson would see this pederastic motif already at the start of the Hipponax fragment, proposing that the phrase at line 2 means 'in the manner of pederasts'. Following his reading, the woman equates what she intends to do, inserting something into her victim's rear, with an aggressive homosexual act (an emasculation/subordination of the 'patient' that compounds the indignity). Her action, as she prepares to 'fall upon' (ἐμπίπτουσα) the speaker's body, would then anticipate what the beetles have in mind.[31]

On both counts explored here—the burlesque re-envisioning of martial epic and the evocation of a down-market sexual practice—fr. 92 W turns its back on the milieus portrayed not only in Homer, but additionally in contemporary melic and elegiac song. Where members of the elite looked to the Iliadic heroes as exemplars of the values and hierarchy they promoted, and presented sexual encounters in their sympotic poetry with wit, refinement, and euphemism, the iambographer reveals all this as so much posturing. Within the very different scene imagined by Hipponax, the Lydian dress and mores that characterize the sophisticated symposiast become the obscene gibberish spouted by a prostitute giving the iambic ego a spanking, while the elegant dining hall is replaced by the back alley and latrine.[32] This context, I suggest, readily accommodates the *kantharos*, the creature that, in the animal world,

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[29] As Henderson 1975, 137 details, the joke depends on the association of the door with a woman's sexual organs.

[30] See Henderson 1975, 199.

[31] For the homosexual proclivities of *kantharoi*, see Miralles and Pòrtulas 1988, 91–92. As they point out, in Aelian *NA* 10.15, the *kantharos* is a creature of hyper-masculinity; there is apparently no female of the species; instead the insect engenders its young from dung, and 'has nothing in it of the feminine nature'.

[32] An audience might even understand the 'whistling' of the beetles as the counterpart to the music of the flute-players at the symposium.

leads the 'basest' (κάκιστον) of lives, and that additionally may already be known to figure in the humble genre of prose storytelling.

The second evocation of *kantharoi* in Hipponax, in fr. 78 W, is still more obscure. Again the context seems to be a case of impotence, although on this occasion the insects are not directly involved in the cure (achieved, seemingly, by a wooden instrument, a fish, and mulberry juice). Instead the dung beetles appear following a reference to a month that, if we accept Bossi's probable supplement Λαυριῶνα, would be the month in which the sewers stink.[33] Gerber suggests the translation 'throughout the month of Bull Shit'.[34] The presence of the dung beetles would then be explained by the insect's characteristic attraction to its food of choice.

3. *Attic comedy*

Because of the fragmentary nature of the evidence, it remains impossible to determine whether the iambographers viewed the *kantharos* as a motif particularly suited to their genre and even as perhaps in some way emblematic for the lowly poetic personas and practices native to it. But by the later fifth century the beetle has acquired just such a generic and thematic 'charge', serving as a flag that can indicate an author's debts to the earlier literary traditions already discussed. As I aim to demonstrate, in Aristophanic usage the appearance of the *kantharos* both heralds the dramatist or speaker's turn to the iambic or more broadly invective repertoire and exhibits a firm association not just with fable but with the 'original' situation in which the eagle and dung beetle tale was told: although the *Vitae* cite several *ainoi* to which Aesop treats the wicked Delphians as he is charged and taken to his death, by Aristophanes' day this particular story had become the one uniquely cited as his riposte to the indignity visited on him by his opponents.

So far (with the possible exception of the Semonides fragment), the *kantharoi* of fable and *iambos* have remained distinct. It is Aristophanes who neatly joins the two traditions, both grafting onto the Aesopic insect the practices and proclivities that Hipponax had privileged in his songs, and framing the insect within the abusive discourse that, by

[33] Bossi 1990 *ad loc.* The term puns on the actual name of a month Taureon used in several Ionian cities.

[34] Gerber 1999 *ad loc.*

the fifth century at least, was among the recognized features of the iambic genre.[35] I begin with the *kantharos* that figures so prominently in the *Peace* and that, as Ralph Rosen has argued, announces its double literary genealogy.[36] Early on in the play the protagonist Trygaeus declares that his madcap enterprise of ascending to Olympus on the back of a *kantharos* takes its inspiration from Aesop. That the beetle alone of creatures could fly up to Heaven was an idea he found 'in the stories of Aesop' (ἐν τοῖσιν Αἰσώπου λόγοις, 129–130). Trygaeus goes on briefly to précis the tale, describing how the insect went 'in pursuance of his hatred (*ekhthran*) of the eagle inasmuch as he was rolling the eggs out and trying to take vengeance for himself' (133–134). As van Dijk comments, the fable permeates the dramatic scenario in several respects, most importantly insofar as the journey of the comic beetle both recapitulates that of its Aesopic ancestor and the latter-day insect aims similarly to achieve the righting of a prior wrong. 'In *Peace*, Trygaeus flies up to heaven mounted on a dung beetle to call Zeus to account in the name of Greece, like the dung beetle in the fable flew up to Zeus to punish the eagle in the name of the hare'.[37]

The call for an Ionian at 43–48 to explain to an Athenian what the dung beetle is doing in the play and the Ionian's subsequent statement that the beetle αἰνίσσεται ('is a riddle for, hints at') Cleon's supposed coprophagy is, Rosen persuasively demonstrates, further recognition of the Aesopic nature of a conceit that has already been assigned to the fable-teller.[38] Ionia was considered the source for the fable tradi-

[35] As noted (n. 15), the degree to which *iambos* was associated with *psogos* remains a matter of debate. In the early fifth century Pindar makes invective the rhetorical mode in which Archilochus deals (*P.* 2.52–56; but note too *O.* 9.1–2; for very detailed discussion of the evidence, see Rotstein (forthcoming)).

[36] Rosen 1984; this article appears in an abbreviated form in Rosen 1988, 28–35. While Bowie 2002, 45–46 questions the association that Rosen's discussion of the episode in *Peace* aims to establish between Attic comedy and *iambos*, Rosen's treatment of the particular passage remains persuasive. There is also no doubting that at least in its deployment of Aesopic fables, Old Comedy does continue iambic practice: Aristophanes names Aesop directly eight times in his plays, while material drawn from the fables more generally informs his language and plots.

[37] Van Dijk 1997, 209–210.

[38] Slave: And then someone of the spectators, a youth who considers himself wise, might say, 'What's going on? What's the dung beetle there for?' And some Ionian sitting alongside him tells him, 'I think it's a riddle/*ainos* about Cleon, how that man shamelessly eats excrement' (OI. A'· Οὐκοῦν ἂν ἤδη τῶν θεατῶν τις λέγοι / νεανίας δοκησίσοφος· 'Τόδε πρᾶγμα τί; / Ὁ κάνθαρος δὲ πρὸς τί;' Κᾆτ' αὐτῷ γ' ἀνὴρ / Ἰωνικός τίς φησι παρακαθήμενος· / 'Δοκέω μέν, ἐς Κλέωνα τοῦτ' αἰνίσσεται, / ὡς κεῖνος ἀναιδέως τὴν σπατίλην ἐσθίει').

tion, and *ainoi* relay their message in an oblique or riddling fashion. As Rosen also argues, the lines include a nod towards Ionian *iambos*. To recapitulate his reading, the dung beetle's appearance is additionally styled an *ainos* because it serves, as fables did in the iambic tradition, an invective purpose.[39] Going one better than the iambographers, Aristophanes neatly has it both ways: even as Trygaeus' subsequent denial of the beetle's derisive function reinforces the enigmatic or paradoxical quality characteristic of the *ainos*, the malice-laden association between the politician and a diet of dung has already been sounded.[40]

Nor is there any missing which particular iambographer Aristophanes has in mind. In Henderson's discussion of scatology, he observes the close overlap between the vocabulary of Hipponax's fr. 92 W and that of Aristophanes' play, suggesting that the visualization of the dung beetles 'swarming in a squadron towards the latrine … distinctly foreshadows the prologue to *Peace*'.[41] Just as in the fragment cited above the beetles are attracted by the diarrhea of the speaker, so Trygaeus envisions an analogous situation at 151, begging the men of Athens to restrain themselves so as not to draw his coprophagous mount back to earth by virtue of their defecation. As the beetle begins to rise in the air, his rider is alarmed to discover that the insect is 'inclining [his] nostrils towards the latrines' (157–158), using a term already found in Hipponax 92.10;[42] the danger becomes particularly acute as the beetle and rider pass over the least salubrious and most *déclassé* quarter of Athens, the Piraeus. Patent too is the association between the dung beetle and homosexuality already present in Hipponax. The *kantharos*, we discover, particularly favors the excrement of boys who have been buggered and is destined to enjoy a particularly choice diet of the stuff up in Olympus, there guaranteed eternal food by the excretions of the archetypal *erômenos* Ganymede (723–725).

In my reading of fr. 92 W, I suggested that a parody of Homeric epic lay behind the description of the beetles' attack and that Hipponax

[39] Rosen 1984, 391: 'the fact that the Ionian's obscene explanation of the dung beetle amounts to an attack on Cleon … strengthens his connection with *iambos*, since, as is well known, iambographic use of *aischrologia* often served invective purposes'.

[40] Imputations of dung-eating regularly occur in Attic comedy: see, for example, Ar. *Nu.* 169–173, 1430–1431, *Pl.* 706, *Ec.* 595; according to a scholion on *V.* 1183, where the politician Theogenes appears in the company of a dung collector, Aristophanes also couples the individual with dung in fr. 571. For other examples of the practice in Attic comedy, see Henderson 1975, 192–194.

[41] Henderson 1975, 23.

[42] Rosen 1984, 395 suggests an echo here.

had deliberately subverted the heroic character of the Iliadic swarm. In Aristophanes too the gigantic *kantharos* is implicated in an act of literary inversion and deflation, one first flagged by the response of Trygaeus' daughter to her father's scheme: she suggests that he look to a more elevated model, that of Bellerophon mounted on Pegasus, in order to make his ascent 'in more tragic fashion' (137). This remark, combined with the numerous equestrian metaphors used of the *kantharos*-ride (74, 75, 81, 126, 181), Trygaeus' several evocations of Pegasus by way of comparison to his mount (76, 154), and his daughter's second appeal to the winged horse (146–148), identifies the tragic model subverted here, Euripides' *Bellerophon*.[43] The generic demotion from tragedy to the register of prose fable and *iambos* accompanies a corresponding sociopolitical downward tilt.

With Trygaeus' substitution of the 'stinking insect' for the 'noble steed',[44] Aristophanes plays off the emphatically elitist associations of equestrian activity in fifth-century Athens, and in a manner that is exactly consonant with the character and status he constructs for his comic hero. No lofty figure like Bellerophon drawn from the 'high' world of heroic epic and tragedy, Trygaeus is an impoverished farmer (121), who lacks the political clout to change current policy, and whose goal is to achieve freedom for others of his kind, τὸν δημότην ὅμιλον, καὶ τὸν γεωργικὸν λεών (920–921). His familiarity with and redeployment of the Aesopic *kantharos* is true to his social type: as Kenneth Rothwell has demonstrated, Aristophanes all but restricts fable-telling to the lower class figures in his drama.[45]

If *Peace* offers the most extended use of the beetle in Aristophanes' repertoire, the fable of the *kantharos* and eagle appears on two other occasions. In *Wasps*, the protagonist Philocleon introduces the beetle and eagle tale, referring to its use by Aesop in the context of the conflict with the Delphians described above. At line 1448 he begins 'Aesop was once accused' only to be interrupted by Bdelycleon's 'I'm not interested'. But the father goes on with his recitation, 'by the Delphians of stealing a libation bowl belonging to the god; and he told them how once upon a time the beetle'. We never hear the sequel since Bdelycleon, remarking 'You'll be the death of me, you and your beetles', forcibly removes Philocleon from the stage. Other discussions

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43 For detailed discussion, see van Dijk 1997, 206–207 and Olson 1998, xxxii–xxxiv.

44 The terms belong to van Dijk 1997, 206–207.

45 Rothwell 1995.

have detailed the incongruities implicit in Philocleon's self-insertion in the place of Aesop and the comic disjunction between the situations in which each tells the story.[46] But where Aristophanes' protagonist does match his predecessor is in the figure he wishes to cut in the scene, that of the victim of a violent and (in Philocleon's account at least) unprovoked assault at the hands of a more powerful enemy. For this situation, the beetle and eagle fable has, in distinction to the other *ainoi* attributed to Aesop on the occasion of his wrongful arrest, become the *mot juste*.

As commentators note, Philocleon's identification with Aesop and his attempted fable-telling also match the 'literary-generic' profile he has assumed previously in the drama, having already demonstrated on no less than four occasions his readiness to relate *ainoi*, both Aesopic and Sybaritic. These earlier episodes also establish what types of social situations elicit (or prohibit) a turn to fables. In the first instance, the tale of the mouse and weasel was deemed unfit for polite sympotic company by Bdelycleon (1182–1185),[47] while the stories narrated at 1399–1405 and 1435–1440, when Philocleon faces his accusers, have an invective purpose that jibes with the use of fables in *iambos*. Once again, sociopolitical orientation and a predilection for fables go hand in hand; as Rothwell details,[48] the dramatist presents Philocleon as a low-status individual, unused to the elite culture of the symposium, and an adherent, as his name proclaims, of the radical and populist democracy. No wonder that his much more refined, sophisticated and well-to-do son Bdelycleon has a marked antipathy to fables.

A passing allusion to the eagle and dung beetle story in *Lysistrata* provides the last of its triad of appearances in Aristophanes. Here a member of the semichorus of women addresses one of the men in the

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[46] Like the fabulist, the speaker is subjected to being violently dragged away and he too has been charged with misdemeanors, including the theft of a flute-player, destruction of merchandise, and assault. But whereas Aesop is innocent of the false accusation brought against him, Philocleon is emphatically guilty; and where the fabulist was seeking to escape death, Bdelycleon threatens his father with nothing worse than ejection from the scene in an attempt to protect him from his accusers. For this, see van Dijk 1997, 197.

[47] The incipit of the fable prompts Bdelycleon's own sudden descent into the abusive mode, as he begins to castigate his father, only then to assign his words to those that the politician Theogenes spoke to 'a dung collecter, and this in insult' (λοιδορούμενος, 1184). By the fifth century, λοιδορεῖσθαι has become the regular term to describe stylized exchanges of abuse; for this see Collins 2004, 72.

[48] Rothwell 1995, 241–242.

rival semichorus that has come to take back the Acropolis, threatening (in Sommerstein's vivid translation) (*Lys.* 695), 'I'll midwife you as the beetle did the breeding eagle' (αἰετὸν τίκτοντα κάνθαρός σε μαιεύσομαι). Much as in *Wasps*, although in more apposite fashion, the beetle figures the apparently weak and helpless individual confronted by a stronger antagonist. A glance towards the story behind the Aesopic telling of the *ainos* is also present here, insofar as the aggressor threatens to violate a sacred space just as the Delphians did Aesop's sanctuary of the Muses. While the speaker's monitory purpose matches Aesop's intention in telling his fable, her words also carry an unmistakable invective flavor. The threat comes as the culmination of a speech in which the chorus member describes herself as 'angry enough to bite' (689) and 'excessively angry' (ὑπερχολῶ, 694), and declares her readiness to unleash her rage on her opponent.[49] As van Dijk details, the parting jibe involves several neat turns to the invective screw.[50] The dung beetle did quite the opposite of bringing to birth the eagle's offspring, instead prompting a premature and fatal 'hatching' of the eggs by causing their precipitation from the lap of Zeus, while additional insult lies with the speaker's effeminization of her victim as she situates the man in the role of the female eagle whom she proposes (not) to 'deliver' of his progeny. Perhaps too an actual act of aggression is threatened here: the woman is suggesting that she will do something to her opponent's testicles equivalent to what the dung beetle did to the eagle's eggs, namely deprive the organs of their reproductive powers.[51]

The focus on reproduction in the speaker's succinct deployment of the *ainos* develops a theme already prominent in the Aesopic tale. It is not only that the beetle causes the eagle's loss of its young on this and the previous occasions cited in the fable; the hostility between the two protagonists also ultimately results in a curtailment of the eagle's breeding season, now limited to the period of the year in which beetles are not about.[52] The (in)fertility motif privileged by Aristophanes' speaker here also coheres more broadly with the 'iambic' deployment of *ainos* as a weapon in the hands of the vituperative and victimized speaker seeking revenge for a prior wrong: offspring or the deprivation thereof

[49] Rothwell 1995, 243 notes that while the chorus of older women are members of the upper classes, the turn to fable here 'coarsens their speech'.

[50] Van Dijk 1997, 217.

[51] See Henderson 1987 *ad loc.*

[52] Since the aetiological aspect of the tale only first appears in the version included in the fable collections, issues of chronology are obviously problematic here.

was a central concern in Archilochus' narration of the Aesopic fable of the fox and eagle in his battle with Lycambes.[53] Arrested reproduction, whether in the form of the destruction of children present and future or of a man's loss of potency is not only a choice theme and rich source of invective among the iambographers (as the impotence-centered fragments of Hipponax cited above demonstrate) but also figures importantly in the 'history' of the genre. As the Mnesiepes Inscription records, as a result of their wrongful punishment of Archilochus for his performance of something 'too iambic', the men of Paros were afflicted with impotence (ἀσθενεῖς εἰς τὰ αἰδοῖα, E_1coll. III, 43–44); the cure came about only with the rehabilitation of the poet. The *kantharos*, as the allusion to the insect in *Lysistrata* makes clear, and as the contexts in which it appears in Hipponax's two fragments also suggest, is thus neatly positioned at the intersection of the fable and iambic traditions. It is an Aesopic animal implicated in this proto-typical 'iambic' form of retribution.

On one last count, the eagle-*kantharos* fable so prominent in Old Comedy may recommend itself to those whose purpose is to ridicule and humiliate a stronger and injurious party. As the biographical tradition 'reconstructs' events, the shrine-dragging incident that prompted Aesop to tell the tale forms part of the more extended series of polemical encounters between the fabulist and the Delphians through the course of his ill-fated visit to their community. From the first, there is a marked antipathy between the townsmen and the newcomer, the result, our (albeit post-classical) sources report, of the criticism and mockery—sometimes provoked, sometimes seemingly gratuitous, depending on which version we read—that Aesop repeatedly, and in a series of public performances, directs against his wealthy, venal, and idle hosts. The vocabulary used of these attacks in the testimonia aligns them with the (also public) discourse of mockery and abuse practiced by the archaic iambographers: *Vita* G calls Aesop's vilification 'calumny' (τὸ κακόλογον, 127), a scholion to *Wasps* 1446 (= Perry *Test.* 21) reports that he 'jeered (ἀποσκῶψαι) at the Delphians' and a second-century papyrus

[53] Both Brown 1997, 65–66 and Irwin 1998, 179–182 have demonstrated the central concern with fertility in the Archilochean use of the fox and eagle fable and its particular applicability to the context prompting the telling of the tale, the broken marriage vow. The eagle's loss of its fledglings speaks to the fate that the poet wishes on his antagonist, an end to his family that will exactly answer the wrong he has done Archilochus: in reneging on his marriage promise, Lycambes has effectively put paid to his victim's hope for progeny.

drawn from the *Vita*-tradition (*P. Oxy.* 1800, fr. 2.32–46, = Aesop *Test.* 25 Perry) describes how Aesop 'reproached and ridiculed' (ὀνιδ[ί]ζων ἐπέσκωψεν) the Delphians on account of their greed in snatching portions of sacrificial animals from the altar.[54] Also pertinent to my argument is a scholion to a passage in Callimachus that simply reports that Aesop told the fable of the beetle and eagle when he was about to be precipitated from a cliff or stoned to death by the Delphians, who were infuriated ([ἀγανα]κτήσαντας) at having been made the butt of his mockery (σκωφθῆναι).[55] So consistent is the motif, and the vocabulary in which it is expressed, that the story may well have already been current in classical times. If, as Philocleon's choice of the *ainos* suggests, the eagle-insect fable was also privileged as the riposte on this occasion when the fabulist was being punished for playing the mocker/iambographer's role,[56] then the *kantharos* that figures Aesop in the story would exhibit an affinity with the practitioner of ridicule and invective.

4. *Hellenistic Poetry*

The passages considered so far do not exhaust fifth- and fourth-century drama's evocations of the humble dung beetle. A handful of other mentions of the insect are listed in a scholion to *Peace*, which documents the appearances of the supposedly outsized Aetnean dung beetle on which Trygaeus rides in other comedy and satyr plays.[57] While entomologists worry about the zoological reality behind the comic conceit, I want simply to suggest that by the late classical age the *kantharos* carried with it a number of generic and thematic associations. Linked with the 'low' Aesopic and iambic registers and with the intersections between them, frequently deployed within abusive, derisive and agonistic speech, it was also credited with dietary and sexual proclivities of a distinctly unsa-

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[54] For more on this, see p. 105.

[55] Pap. Scol. Ital. 1094, p. 165 Callimachus I (Pfeiffer).

[56] Like Archilochus in the incident cited above, Aesop is punished for his performance of something that could also be called 'too iambic', although in a different sense. As far as I know, there has been no systematic treatment of the many overlaps between Aesop and the Ionian iambographers, particularly Hipponax. For pointers in this direction, see Rosen 2007, 99 with discussion of the Thersites/Aesop overlap; also Jedrkiewicz 1989. For the Callimachean 'Hipponax' as Aesop, see n. 71.

[57] Σ *ad* 73. See Davies and Kathirithamby 1986, 86 for these and other passing references.

vory and vulgar kind. In turning to the Hellenistic age, I explore how fresh evocations of the insect depend on their authors' and audience's familiarity with the literary genealogy of the creature, and involve redeployments and modifications of the motifs and generic registers already native to it. Here too the Alexandrian poets add novel elements to the Aesopic-iambic medley delineated so far, introducing into their texts learned allusions to beetle behavior that turn out to promote its association with invective practice.

My first example, Callimachus' thirteenth *Iamb*, makes no direct reference to the *kantharos* nor to any form of insect life, and much of my discussion of the text may seem ancillary to this chapter's central concern. But in the reading I propose the composition actually includes what may be an association of practitioners of Ionian-style invective with the beetle (or a related form of insect) and additionally links those who follow in the Hipponactean tradition with alimentary practices and failings that typify iambographers and their victims from archaic times on. Nor is it surprising to find reflections on the nature of *iambos* and its tropes and motifs within the work: the thirteenth *Iamb*, by virtue of its patently programmatic nature, its use of the Ionic dialect and choliambic meter, and its repeated nods to the archaic iambic tradition, has long been a favorite with readers looking to demonstrate the Hellenistic poet's debts to his predecessors in the genre.[58]

Perhaps the final work in the collection,[59] Callimachus' composition introduces a situation parallel to that which the more familiar opening song describes. Once again the author imagines a literary *agôn*, now featuring the poet in dialogue with an unnamed critic who faults him for his style and compositional and generic practices.[60] But, in keeping with the tit-for-tat structure of archaic invective exchanges, and the surprise victory achieved by the seemingly weaker character in the iambic enmities constructed by Archilochus and Hipponax, the victim of unjustified abuse turns the tables on his interlocutor. In the lines on which I focus, and whose relevance first to invective, and then to the beetle I aim to demonstrate, Callimachus offers a concentrated attack on a more generalized group of quarrelsome characters, whose mali-

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[58] For recent discussions and documentation of iambic motifs in the work, Clayman 1980, 44–47, Acosta-Hughes 2002, 70–103.

[59] For recent treatment of the question, see Kerkhecker 1999, 250–251.

[60] Kerkhecker 1999, 253–257 and Hunter 1997, 42–45 offer full discussions of the nature of the critic's attack, and the particular practices and compositions he objects to.

cious and unprovoked charges (several drawn from the Hipponactean repertoire) against him he has just cited (54–57). The speaker begins his retaliation by styling his antagonists (critics and poets both) inimical to the Muses and then describes how the goddesses, fearing the slander to which the defendant has been treated, fly past these φαῦλοι (a term with marked class as well as moral implications) rather than endowing them with the requisite inspiration. The speaker continues with a curious visualization of his calumnists (58–62):

> to associate with men of little worth … have flown by
> and themselves tremble lest they be badly spoken of.
> For which reason nothing rich, but famine-causing bits
> each scrapes off with the tips of his fingers
> as though from the olive tree, which gave rest to Leto.

> φαύλοις ὁμι[λ]εῖ[ν….] ̣ν π̣α̣ρέπτησαν
> καὐταὶ τρομεῦσα̣ι̣ μὴ κακῶ̣ς ἀ̣κούσωσι·
> τοῦδ' οὕνεκ' οὐδὲν πῖον, ἀ[λλὰ] λιμηρὰ̣
> ἕκαστος ἄκροις δακτύλοις ἀ̣π̣ο̣κνίζει,
> ὡς τῆς ἐλαίης, ἣ ἀνέπαυσε τ̣ὴν Λητώ.

While the meaning of Callimachus' riposte is clear—his antagonists' failure to 'get a decent bite'[61] of the tree signifies their inability to produce anything worthwhile, whether poetry or criticism—the bizarre behavior imputed to them remains unaccounted for. Commentators on the image frequently limit their discussion to citing a passage from Callimachus' fourth *Hymn* where, at 316–326, the poet describes an obscure ritual performed by merchant sailors at Apollo's Delian shrine (a practice mentioned only here, and that may be Callimachus' invention). There, hands bound behind their back, they circle around the Asterian altar and try to take a bite from the trunk of the sacred olive tree, an action originally devised by the Delian nymph as a mirth-provoking entertainment (παίγνια … γελαστύν, 324) for the youthful Apollo.[62] While the account given in *Iamb* 13 recalls that ritual—and in each instance the action is of an aggressive, futile and faintly ridiculous kind—in the iambic context the gustatory aspect comes much more obviously to the fore. The terms 'rich' and 'faminous' belong to alimentary vocabulary, casting those who scratch as individuals seeking nourishment from the wood of the tree.

[61] The terms belong to Kerkhecker 1999, 267.
[62] The most detailed discussion remains that of Mineur 1984, 245–252.

The diet of wood and the grating or boring that the term ἀποκνίζει describes, I suggest, point simultaneously to the two related areas with which the poem is centrally concerned, literary criticism and calumny. For the first, Callimachus may be alluding to a remark in Aristophanes' *Frogs*, so rich a source for the Alexandrian poet's aesthetic vocabulary, particularly in the context of literary polemic. In the Aristophanic *agôn*, Aeschylus prefaces his devastating oil-flask attack on his opponent's prologues by declaring, 'I'm not going to scrape (κνίσω) at every single expression of yours, word by word' (1198–1199).[63] If scraping is what one inept poet/critic does to another's poetic oeuvre (and an apt characterization of the unnamed critic's procedure in Callimachus' poem's first portion), then Callimachus has devised a neat image of his antagonists' assault on his own literary output, which has in one, and possibly two earlier sites (*Iamb* 4.84, where the identical line, 'the olive which gave rest to Leto', appears, and *Hymn* 4, which offers a similar line at 326)[64] featured the Apolline tree under attack here.[65]

The hunger-inducing gleanings obtained by the scrapers' nails draw on several further conceits native to the iambic tradition, and that are pertinent both to the powers that the (just) iambographer possesses and to the price that the practice of (unjustified) abuse seemingly exacts. Earlier I suggested that written into the construction of the iambic persona was the notion that the author could inflict impotence and/or a loss of progeny on his victim. That visitation may also take the form of an agricultural rather than anatomical blight. An intriguing fragment of Archilochus (fr. 230 W) refers to a 'terrible dryness' (κακὴν … αὑονὴν) sent by Zeus to an unidentified group of victims, and the birth of lame offspring, assigned to the inferior practitioners of Hipponactean *iambos* in Callimachus' very next lines (65–66), accompa-

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[63] Earlier Pindar used the term in an aesthetic context, linking the unpleasant sensation of a scratch or scrape with the sentiment of *koros* produced by a laudatory story drawn out too long (*P.* 8.32). In Pindar, praise that is excessive turns into its polar opposites, critique and blame.

[64] See Acosta-Hughes 2002, 100–102 for the problem of the relative chronology of the different works and the suggestion that *Iamb* 13 refers to the possibly already extant *Hymn*.

[65] The alliterative and onomatopoeic description of the fingernails digging, with its repetition of the harsh κ sound, reinforces the association with libelous and malice-spiked literary criticism whose discordant and grating quality Callimachus regularly evokes with just such cacophonous terms. For this, see the excellent discussions by Andrews 1998 and Acosta-Hughes 2002, 46.

nies crop failure and famine in several sources.[66] On a further count, the affliction the Alexandrian calumnists suffer proves apposite to their two-fold characterization as both vilifiers and targets of the poet's reciprocal abuse. As I have detailed elsewhere, from epic poetry on, those who engage in misdirected invective are imagined as possessing clamorous appetites, constantly seeking food while remaining unable to satisfy their ravenous bellies.[67] In quest of rich or fatty (πῖον) meals, and ending up only more hungry than when they began to eat, Callimachus' wood-scraping antagonists belong very much in the same tradition as Pindar's Archilochus, whom the praise poet claims to have seen 'frequently in want of resources, as he grows fat on heavy-worded morsels' (τὰ πόλλ' ἐν ἀμαχανίᾳ … βαρυλόγοις ἔχθεσιν πιαινόμενον, *P.* 2.54–56).

But what of the diet on which these hungry calumnists subsist? From archaic times on, the Greek sources include a class of wood-boring insects who feed on the wholesome bark of the tree and are generally viewed as agricultural and domestic pests (e.g. *Od.* 21.395). Callimachus' language seems to point towards the type. The verb ἀποκνίζω recalls the so-called κνίψ or σκνίψ, an insect which infests and attacks fig and oak trees and whose name is derived from κνίζω or the similar σκνίπτω, to pinch or nip.[68] The still missing piece of the puzzle—the link between these wood-eating and defamatory critics and a particular species of 'hulophagos' beetle closely related to the *kantharos*—is the element the final text I treat will supply. But for the moment, I want only to observe that a kinship between malicious and quarrelsome literary antagonists and insects is one that Callimachus already introduced in the equally programmatic first *Iamb*, with which this (probably) final song stands in complementary relations.[69] There, in the context of the chastisement that a resuscitated 'Hipponax' addressed to a group of aggressive and

[66] Famine and lame birth form a pair in Callimachus' *Hymn to Artemis* (3.124–128), for which see Acosta-Hughes 2002, 77, and the phenomena exist in close relation in a text which informs *Iamb* 13 at several points, Hesiod's *Works and Days*. Note too that as a result of their maltreatment of Aesop, the Delphians suffer a visitation of the plague.

[67] Steiner 2007.

[68] Davies and Kathirithamby 1986, 97–99 discuss the type. Note too the curious fact that the Callimachean Muses fly. As far as I know, neither in art nor text are Muses normally endowed with wings; already the poet seems to move into the realm of flying things.

[69] For recent discussions of the connections between the songs, see Hunter 1997, Acosta-Hughes 2002, 21–103, esp. 89–90.

phthonos-filled contemporary *philologoi* (the counterparts to the poet's targets at 13.58–62) the iambographer offered a pejorative sequence of images to characterize his audience (26–28):

> O Apollo, the men, as flies by a goatherd,
> or wasps from the ground, or Delphians from a sacrifice,
> they swarm in droves. O Hecate, what a throng.
>
> ὤπολλον, ὦ|νδρες, ὡς | παρ' αἰπόλῳ μυῖαι
> ἢ σφῆκες | ἐκ γῆς ἢ ἀπ|ὸ θύματος Δελφ[οί,
> ẹịḷηδ̣ọ̀ν [ἕσ]|μεύουσιν |· ὦ Ἑκάτη πλήθευς[70]

Whether or not the insect analogy so prominent here extends to the later poem, the members of Hipponax's audience presage the poetasters/critics of *Iamb* 13 insofar as they too are greedy appropriators of food not their own. The comparison to the Delphians that the speaker folds into his larger sequence succinctly makes the charge. As I mentioned earlier, and as Callimachus' readers would know, the men of Delphi were notorious for their greedy behavior at the sacrifice, helping themselves to the meat before their proper turn. Just as going at the Delian tree with one's fingernails smacks of sacrilege, so too does this over-hasty seizure of the sacrificial meal. The Delphians' presence in this barrage of insults is suggestive on a second count: here Hipponax appears to assume the role of Aesop who, as earlier described, ridiculed the Delphians for precisely the conduct to which Callimachus' Ionian iambographer now alludes.[71]

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[70] While it is tempting to see with Acosta-Hughes 2002, 50 a very passing allusion to the swarming beetles of Hipponax's fr. 92 W, the scholia to the passage identify what are the more obvious Iliadic sources, the comparison between the myriad Achaeans and flies cited earlier, and the passage in *Il.* 16.259–265, where the Myrmidons setting out for battle are likened to a swarm of wasps, a simile filled with terms that make the insects prototypes for the practitioner of invective and the iambographer (αὐτίκα δὲ σφήκεσσιν ἐοικότες ἐξεχέοντο / εἰνοδίοις, οὓς παῖδες ἐριδμαίνωσιν ἔθοντες / αἰεὶ κερτομέοντες, ὁδῷ ἔπι οἰκί' ἔχοντας). The verb ἐριδμαίνω, a hapax with the meaning of 'irritate, enrage', is built about the term *eris*, while κερτομέω is repeatedly used to preface speeches of mockery and abuse that aim to humiliate their addressee (for the semantics of the verb, see the discussion at p. 111f.). Following Clarke 2001, 336 n. 40, the boys should be imagined as 'shouting abuse' while they attack the insects. As Nagy 1979, esp. 260–264 has shown, both expressions not only regularly appear in epic in the context of exchanges of invective (see, particularly, the account of the archetypal mocker and blamer Thersites, at *Il.* 2.214, 247, 256), but are also privileged by later authors in their characterization of the discourse of vituperation and blame.

[71] The Aesopic flavor to the remark not only reminds an audience that wasps and flies are as at home in the fables that archaic *iambos* included as in Homeric epic, but also anticipates Hipponax's subsequent narration of a fable-like parable in the

Callimachus' intercalation of insects and mockery in the first *Iamb* recurs, in much more overt fashion, in Theocritus' *Idyll* 5, a composition which includes a direct reference to beetles and this in a context which looks back to both the invective and the scatological strands within the creatures' earlier literary profile. At lines 114–115, in the course of an escalating exchange of insults between two rustics engaged in a bucolic song competition, Lacon declares, 'I hate the beetles who, wind-borne, completely gnaw away at the figs of Philondas' (καὶ γὰρ ἐγὼ μισέω τὼς κανθάρος, οἳ τὰ Φιλώνδα / σῦκα κατατρώγοντες ὑπανέμιοι φορέονται). Already in early *iambos*, and in Attic comedy too, the fig not only stands for the female sexual organs but for the phallus and testicles combined.[72] In this light, Lacon's introduction of the *kantharos* makes excellent sense. Although, as Gow comments, the dung beetle does not usually appear as a predator of fig trees (the κνίψ, already described, and 'horned beetle', of which more in a moment, regularly play that role), it possesses just the generic profile and sexual proclivities required here. Not only has the eristic slanging match descended to its scatological nadir, but Lacon's remark neatly caps the reference to deviant homosexual activities in the gambit of Comatas to which he responds.[73] Much as Hipponax's *kantharoi* mounted their assault on the body of the victim, so does this latter-day insect swarm on the unknown figure of Philondas.

A third Hellenistic poet introduces a beetle of a different kind to the poetic repertoire. Nicander refers twice to a particularly noxious kind of insect, the *kantharis* or blister-beetle, so called because its venomous bite raises blisters on the victim's skin. In the *Theriaca* these vicious pests figure only as a point of comparison for the equally aggressive spiders who appear in 'swarms' in the field (754–755), but the *kantharis* returns in its own right in the much fuller discussion at *Alexipharmaka* 115, where the author proposes γλήχων, pennyroyal, as an antidote for its bite. This then leads into a digression on how the herb formed part of the potion that Iambe once served to Demeter (128–133):

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next portion of the poem. 'Hipponax' also figures as an Aesop-like character: he is an individual who comes from a far-away place (Hades) in order to set his hostile audience to rights by means of his mixture of mockery and storytelling.

[72] For examples, see Henderson 1975, 117–118.

[73] See Gutzwiller 1991, 140 with her citation of the scholia in n. 21; she, however, understands Philondas as referring to a woman.

At times administer to the patient doses of pennyroyal
mixed with river water, making a posset of them in a mug.
This was the rich draught of the fasting Deo;
once with this did Deo moisten her throat in the city of Hippothoon
by reason of the unchecked speech of Thracian Iambe. (tr. Gow and Scholfield)

τῷ δὲ σὺ πολλάκι μὲν γληχὼ ποταμηίσι νύμφαις
ἐμπλήδην κυκεῶνα πόροις ἐν κύμβεϊ τεύξας,
νηστείρης Δηοῦς μορόεν ποτὸν ᾧ ποτε Δηώ
λαυκανίην ἔβρεξεν ἀν' ἄστυρον Ἱπποθόωντος
Θρηίσσης ἀθύροισιν ὑπὸ ῥήτρῃσιν Ἰάμβης.

As one discussion remarks,[74] the concatenation of motifs might give a reader pause: while pennyroyal is a traditional ingredient in the Eleusinian *kukeôn*, it is by no means the chief nor most important one, and the description of Iambe and her 'unchecked speech' seems to have little to do with remedies against the insect's poison, the poet's ostensible concern. But the sequence may observe a logic of its own. According to several other texts, including one by Nicander, the *kukeôn* exists in close and sequential relation to mocking or derisive speech. The curative impact the potion has on the beetle's bite might then depend on the preexisting association between the insect with its venomous properties and the origins and impact of ridicule and verbal abuse, whose biting, stinging, and corrosive powers were a commonplace from the early classical period on.[75]

The description of Iambe's speech includes the necessary pointer to the latent motif that unites the different elements in Nicander's account. While the expression 'doorless' may describe mere garrulousness (Iambe is certainly described as excessively talkative in some accounts),[76] it can also indicate a discourse that lacks decorum and restraint and is suited to the *aiskhrologia* that Iambe offers elsewhere.[77] A scholion's gloss on the passage supports the reading; according to the commentary, the goddess drank 'on account of the playful (παιγνιώδεσι) words of the Thracian Iambe and her pose'. Bringing the anecdote in line with the traditional Eleusinian version of the myth (Iambe becomes a servant of Metaneira in the scholiast's account), the annotator also

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[74] Brown 1997, 22.

[75] For the 'bite' of slander in Pindar, see *P.* 2.53. For many other examples drawn from Greek and Roman literature, see Dickie 1981.

[76] See Olender 1990, 86 for the relevant sources.

[77] The canonical source is, of course, *H.H. Cer.* 202–204.

observes the connection between Iambe and *iambos* and mentions her performance of σκώμματα.[78]

If the scholion registers the connection between Iambe and the discourse of mockery or abuse, a song of Hipponax includes the antidotal relation of the *kukeôn* to *iambos* that seems to inform Nicander's account. There is a patent suggestion of hunger and even starvation in Hipponax's request for a bushel of barley with which to mix a curative dose in fr. 39 W:

> I'll give my soul up to an evil end
> if you don't send me as quickly as possible a bushel
> of barley, so that I may make a potion from the groats
> to drink as a remedy for my sorry state/knavery.

> κακοῖσι δώσω τὴν πολύστονον ψυχήν,
> ἢν μ⟨ὴ ἀ⟩ποπέμψῃς ὡς τάχιστά μοι κριθ⟨έω⟩ν
> μέδιμνον, ὡς ἂν ἀλφίτων ποιήσωμαι
> κυκεῶνα πίνειν φάρμακον πονηρίης.

By calling that potion a *kukeôn* (4), the speaker links it to the ritual drink consumed by future initiates at Eleusis as they reenact the moment when Demeter put an end to her fasting (*H.H. Cer.* 206–211).[79] Part of the joke and indecorum of the iambic fragment lies with the demotion of Demeter's self-imposed abstinence, a sign of her mourning, to a fast which is anything but self-willed and the result of the speaker's poverty.[80] But the expression that closes the text at line 4, φάρμακον πονηρίης, gives the Eleusinian connection a different cast. By virtue of drinking the therapeutic cocktail, much as Demeter did, the speaker will be able to put a stop not only to what Masson's commentary

[78] The relation between Iambe and *iambos* (both in the sense of invective poetry and of the metrical foot favored by the genre) is well established in the ancient sources, although the precise nature of the association varies from source to source. Rosen 2007, 51 states the matter very well: 'We cannot know the developmental vector of these associations—whether iambographic poetry was actually named *for* the figure of Iambe in the myth, or whether the figure of Iambe herself was inspired by a preexisting form of poetry in which the poet played a vituperative role analogous to Iambe in the myth—but in either case it is clear that the myth came to be commonly connected with a poetic form in the minds of ancient audiences' (ital. in the original).

[79] For detailed discussion of Hipponax's use of the image, see Rosen 1987. The choice of nourishment may also follow on from the economic situation of the speaker: as Richardson 1974, App. IV shows, the *kukeôn* came to symbolize a frugal lifestyle.

[80] Rosen 1987, 417 n. 5 observes the etymological link between πονηρία and πενία. As Rosen also suggests (1987, 423–424), like the Eleusinian *kukeôn* too, this potion is a cure of πονηρία insofar as it might offer the drinker the chance of material prosperity as well as literal sustenance while he lives.

nicely renders his 'mechanceté', his roguishness or villainy, but also to that broader state of 'abjection' which the term πονηρία, when used by an individual of his own condition, signifies.[81] When spoken by the iambographer within the context of performance, this would, I suggest, include the practice of the modes of speech and poetry native to his poetic persona, mocking and invective discourse. Assuming the roles of both Iambe, whose ribaldry became an *aition* for poetic ridicule and joking, and Demeter, whose drinking of the *kukeôn* effectively put a stop to the performance, Hipponax suggests that a wholesome diet will allow the now hungry iambographer to change his tune.[82]

The antithetical relation between the *kukeôn* and abusive or derisive speech, the first as response and antidote to the second, is something to which Nicander refers on another occasion. The gecko with its noxious bite appears among the venomous reptiles the poet discusses in a passage complete with the story of the creature's origins (*Ther.* 484–487):

> Of him the tale is current how the Sorrowing
> Demeter did him injury when she marred the limbs of him as boy
> by the well Callichorum, after wise Metaneira of old
> had received the goddess in the dwelling of Celeus. (tr. Gow and Scholfield)
>
> τὸν μέν τε ῥέει φάτις οὕνεκ' Ἀχαιὴ
> Δημήτηρ ἔβλαψεν ὅθ' ἄψεα σίνατο παιδὸς
> Καλλίχορον παρὰ φρεῖαρ, ὅτ' ἐν Κελεοῖο θεράπναις
> ἀρχαίη Μετάνειρα θεὴν δείδεκτο περίφρων.

Antoninus Liberalis 24, citing Nicander (fr. 6) as his source, fills in the details of the abbreviated account. One Misme receives Demeter during her wanderings through Attica and gives her visitor a *kukeôn* to drink to appease her thirst. When her son Ascalabus mocks the goddess for drinking it down too eagerly, she throws the remains at him, and he becomes a gecko, so inimical to gods and men that whoever kills it wins Demeter's favor. Here the *kukeôn* acts in a manner very close to that in the *Alexipharmaca* account, still more obviously putting an end

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[81] Masson 1962, 128, For the term as 'abjection' and its relation to invective, see Rosen 2007, 65 nn. 55 and 56 and 244–245.

[82] Here I build on and modify Rosen's account at 1987, 421. He suggests that drinking the *kukeôn* 'inspires the speaker with iambographic *aischrologia*' allowing him to counter the πονηρία or abuse he suffers from his enemies. According to the Eleusinian sequence however, the ritual involves fasting, *aiskhrologia*, and then the *kukeôn*; consumption of the drink follows after the iambic performance.

to verbal mockery (although in this instance that mockery comes not in the form of a 'performance', but as an unmediated rebuke). Even as the 'iambic' quality of Ascalabus' address is implicit in the account—greedy consumption of food and drink is a regular charge in the archaic iambographers—so the tale preserves the association between invective and a noxious attack, as Ascalabus' powers of abusive speech are reimagined in the form of the reptile's 'hateful bites' (ἀπεχθέα βρύγματα, 483). Suggestive too of the tale's role as an alternate aetiology for the practice of invective is the detail of the youth's deformed limbs: from the Homeric Thersites on, lameness and pedal deformities regularly afflict those engaged in invective exchanges and find audible realization in the so-called 'limping' meter supposedly invented by Hipponax.[83]

5. *An entomological* aition *for invective song*

Another tale of a metamorphosis similar to the change in state that Ascalabus undergoes concludes my account, bringing together many of the strands that have appeared in isolation so far. The story also provides a fitting sequel to the evolution of the *kantharos* motif in the Hellenistic poets. Where the archaic and classical sources confined the insect to base literary genres—prose fables, Ionian *iambos*—and/or placed evocations of the beetle in the mouths of low-class characters or those choosing to adopt a coarse, abusive form of speech, the Hellenistic poets used the earlier material and its generic moorings to construct a variety of more particularized, if fanciful bonds between beetles (or, in the case of Callimachus, insects of different kinds) and the discourse of mockery and invective. The tale of Cerambus completes this trajectory, replacing the allusive and associative connections the Alexandrian authors devise with a much more straightforward causality: the mocker and the beetle finally become one.

As in the tale of Ascalabus presented above, Antoninus Liberalis citing Nicander as his source gives the fullest version of events.[84] Ceram-

[83] See Steiner 2007, 37 n. 1; so too the inferior Hipponaxes of Callimachus' *Iamb* 13 generate 'lame offspring' (66).

[84] Ovid also briefly mentions the metamorphosis at 7.353–356, although his version is rather different from that of the Greek authors.

bus was the son of Poseidon and a nymph, a shepherd who pastured his flocks at the foot of the mountain Othrys. He was also a musician, famous for his bucolic songs, and is credited by Antoninus with having invented the syrinx and with being the first mortal to play the lyre, accompanying the nymphs in their dance. But his good fortune turns sour when he disregards the advice of Pan, who counsels him to move his flocks down from the mountain for the winter, and he additionally addresses displeasing and thoughtless words to the nymphs (ἀπέρριψεν δὲ λόγον ἄχαρίν τε καὶ ἀνόητον εἰς τὰς νύμφας, 22.4). Antoninus, describing the shepherd's activity with the term ἐκερτόμησεν (5), reports the substance of the mockery. Cerambus denies the nymphs their divine genealogy and imputes amorous liaisons to Poseidon with one of their company. Retribution comes when winter arrives suddenly and the flocks of Cerambus disappear along with the paths and trees; by way of further punishment, and because the shepherd has vilified them (ἐλοιδόρησε, 5), the nymphs turn him into a wood-eating (ὑλοφάγος) cerambyx, a large horned beetle. The remainder of Antoninus' account concerns the insect's appearance and habits. It frequents wood, has curving teeth and ever-moving jaws; black, long, and with hard wings, it resembles, the author remarks, large *kantharoi*. Antoninus also cites an alternate name for the creature—'wood-eating ox' (ξυλοφάγος βοῦς)—and notes that children use it as a toy, cutting off its head and wearing it around their necks. The account concludes by comparing the appearance of the horned head to that of the tortoiseshell lyre. The story has thus gone full circle. The hero has a name that turns out to generate much of his life history: it recalls an identifying characteristic of the instrument on which he plays and anticipates the animal into which he is ultimately turned.[85]

There are three interrelated elements in the story on which I want to focus: the motif of abusive speech and song, the trees that serve as a source of the insect's food, and the relation between this tale and the *Homeric Hymn to Hermes*. While the misfortune Cerambus suffers results broadly from his disregard of Pan's advice, within the narrative sequence it is his scurrilous songs that more immediately precede his change in state. As Jesper Svenbro points out, the tale highlights the link between the singer and verbal abuse as it plays on the linguistic

[85] The 'generating' function of the protagonist's name is highlighted by Svenbro 1999. As the subsequent notes reflect, my reading of the story follows Svenbro's illuminating discussion in many respects.

element common to Cerambus' name and his activity (τοιαῦτα μὲν ὁ *Κέρ*αμβος *ἐκερ*τόμησεν, 5), twice repeating the *κερ* that can be derived from κείρω, 'to cut'.[86] The notion of cutting is further reduplicated in the verb's own formation. While Chantraine and Frisk declare the etymology of κερτομέω irrecoverable, LSJ *s.v.* 8 follows the ancient lexicographers and scholia who, adopting what was probably the popular view, derive it from κῆρ + τομέω 'heart' and 'cut'.[87] To speak in this manner is thus to utter a combative word that 'cuts' or 'divides' the organ in question and prompts humiliation and confusion on the part of the addressee.[88] Additional confirmation of the link between the tale's protagonist and abuse or calumny is the second portion of his name; like the notorious victim of Archilochus' compositions, Lycambes, Cerambus' name preserves the *-amb-* element that styles him a participant, and ultimately victim, in exchanges of invective.[89]

As Svenbro further points out, the notion of the cutting power of mockery continues through the later stages of the tale, where the singer becomes the wood-boring insect that endlessly moves its teeth.[90] In this light, the seemingly gratuitous detail that Cerambus includes in his abusive song, the charge that Poseidon once transformed the nymphs into poplar trees, presumably so as to enjoy unimpeded or unobserved his amorous dalliance with one of their number (4), makes retrospective sense. The beetle's eating of the trees would then endlessly reenact the earlier attack on the arboreal nymphs, as the creature's teeth and jaws do the work that his 'cutting' words had earlier performed. That the discourse of abuse and blame feeds on the body of its victim is a notion already expressed in Pindaric song where *phthonos*, the sentiment of spite and grudging jealousy that is the prime motivator of calumny and gain-saying, proves ravenous and even cannibalistic.[91] So the encomiast imagines himself fleeing the bite (δάκος) of the arch-

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[86] Svenrbo 1999, 137.

[87] For this see Jones 1989, 247–250 and the modifications to his argument in Clarke 2001, 331–334; Clarke takes issue with Jones' view that the term refers to language that 'cuts to the quick' insofar as the verb regularly describes cutting that involves division rather than 'piercing' in the sense of wounding.

[88] Here I follow the analysis proposed by Clarke 2001.

[89] Svenbro 1999, 143.

[90] Svenbro 1999, 137–138.

[91] The Delian tree on which Callimachus' opponents seek to feed could also serve as a metonym for his person, or at least his poetry, the target of his abusers' attack. As earlier noted, the poet links that tree firmly to his poetic corpus, repeating a line already found in *Iamb.* 4.84.

slanderer Archilochus as he feeds on his 'heavy worded enmities' (*P.* 2.52–56) and elsewhere rejects the charge that through his less than entirely laudatory account of Neoptolemus he has 'mauled' (ἑλκύσαι) the hero with his words (*N.* 7. 102–104).[92]

For Svenbro, the fact that the metamorphosis coincides with the disappearance of the paths indicates a further aspect of Cerambus' punishment. By virtue of the traditional metaphoric association between paths and poetry, the former constituting the matter or course the song follows, the erstwhile poet finds himself denied his earlier gift.[93] Add the also vanished trees (5) into the account, and the singer-turned-insect exists in a further state of deprivation: without substance on which to feed, he suffers not only literal but also poetic hunger and impoverishment. In casting the hero as the wood-consuming beetle without foodstuff, the story again taps into a number of existing conceits framing the mocker or iambographer. As earlier mentioned, a ravenous hunger that cannot be satisfied forms part of the persona assumed by composers and performers of abuse, or is ascribed to them by a hostile tradition (recall the beetle's ever-moving jaws). Like Pindar's battening Archilochus, Cerambus is destined to an eternal ἀμηχανία as a result of his slander.

Two further elements affiliate Cerambus, the 'first' horned beetle, with the family of practitioners of mocking or abusive song. First, the generic character of his poetry: in Antoninus' tale, what guarantees the musician his initial notoriety is his skill in 'bucolic songs' (βουκολικοῖς ᾄσμασι, 2). Theocritus uses this same expression on a number of occasions to refer to competitive singing in which contestants exchange extemporized verse. But as Kathryn Gutzwiller notes, the context in which the poet introduces the term βουκολιάζομαι 'indicates that cowherd speech was aggressive and rivalrous'.[94] Further observing that the verb was formed from βουκολία—an expression for a herd of cattle or the tending of that herd—she cites the gloss on the term in Hesychius; he equates it with κακολογία, 'abuse'.

Finally there is the close relation between Cerambus and his songs and the figure that Antoninus' narrative unmistakably brings to mind.

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[92] For detailed discussion of the trope, see Nagy 1979, 225–226.

[93] Svenbro 1999, 142.

[94] Gutzwiller 1991, 256 n. 13. Recall too the supposed 'catalyst' for the Ionian iambographers' composition of their scurrilous songs; they are designed as retaliations against an *ekhthros* or rival who has already done the poet an injury.

At almost every step of the way the mortal protagonist stands in a mimetic or supplemental relationship to Hermes as depicted in the *Homeric Hymn*, son of a god and minor nymph, musician and herdsman both, and originator of the syrinx here ascribed to Cerambus. Nowhere does Antoninus more signal the two figures' affinity than at the close of the story, where he observes the beetle head's resemblance to the tortoiseshell lyre whose invention the canonical tradition ascribes to Hermes and which Sophocles, evoking that act of invention, already styles the 'horned beetle', κεράστης κάνθαρος (frr. 307–308 R). To Hermes too belongs the link between the prototype of the lyre and abusive or derisive song. No sooner has the god devised the instrument than he goes on to create a piece that, several commentators suggest, looks very much like a proto-iambic composition: 'The god sang beautifully making trial in random snatches, even as youths incite each other with taunts (παραίβολα κερτομέουσιν) at festivals' (*H.H. Merc.* 55–56).[95] Cerambus' performance takes a second leaf from Hermes' book. Where the god sings of Zeus's dalliance with Maia, an adulterous, illicit, fly-by-night affair, hidden from Hera and the other Olympians (57–58), Cerambus' song recalls a union between Poseidon and one of the Dryads, itself a source of potential disgrace and mockery for the god. But there the two singers' paths diverge. While Hermes turns to the opposite generic register, going on to celebrate his own birth in encomiastic, hymnic terms that anticipate his elevation to Olympian ranks, Cerambus maligns the genealogy of the Nymphs. This choice of a standard invective theme precipitates his transformation into the shape of an animal already implicated in the lowest literary ranks, those occupied by mockery and abuse.

Viewed in relation to the *Homeric Hymn*, the tale offers not so much an aetiology for the stag-beetle as a reflection on the nature and tropes of invective exchanges within a certain literary tradition that embeds the insect at its center. A Johnny-come-lately practitioner and performer of iambic-style mockery, and putative rival to an existing master or originator of the genre, Cerambus finds himself the victim of precisely that role-reversal and table-turning that marks so many earlier

[95] The idea of an antagonistic, eristic performance may even be written into the subject matter of Hermes' first song. As Nagy 1979, 245 notes, for the phrase recounting how Zeus and Maia had formerly conversed in the course of their sexual liaison, several manuscripts record the variant term … ὡς ἠρίζεσκον, embedding the idea of an exchange of hostilities in the occasion described.

encounters between unjustified abusers-cum-rival-performers and their targets. Charged with the loss of wits (θεοβλαβής) for which Archilochus derides Lycambes (fr. 172 W), Cerambus suffers at the hands of those he earlier made his targets and is transformed into the lyre-like beetle which will be the source of amusement (παιγνίον, 6) and entertainment for others.[96] The insect that in fable, *iambos* and comedy had so frequently come out on top when it sought to right a wrong earlier visited on it and/or others, now experiences the fate of other targets in the iambic tradition: it is worsted, silenced and deprived of the matter with which to launch its attacks. Consonant with this degradation are the generic shifts Antoninus' tale observes both in its content and its form: even as Cerambus fails to practice the hymnic and theogonic modes that Hermes comes to perform in the *Homeric Hymn*, opting for calumny instead, so the latter-day author takes matter first presented in the 'high' style of hexameter poetry and refashions it into a lowly prose narrative. The notion of *kakia*, whose many different facets this volume explores, here embraces natural history, genre and social standing, combining the different elements into the humble person of the beetle.

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[96] Cf. Archil. fr. 172 W where the poet holds up Lycambes as a source of laughter for the townspeople.

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CHAPTER FIVE

'BAD' LANGUAGE IN ARISTOPHANES

Ian C. Storey

1. *Introduction*

Tragedy and comedy have been described as the 'twin offspring of the Athenian theatre, and they were non-identical twins'.[1] The division between the two is well known and well studied by Taplin (1986, 1996) and Silk (2000), among others. Tragedy almost always preserves the dramatic illusion, comedy constantly breaks it and calls attention to itself as a genre played in a *theatron* before spectators. No poet is known to have written and competed in both comedy and tragedy, although Plato has his Socrates argue at the end of *Symposium* (223c–d) that the same poet should be capable of both. Tragedy aimed at a serious (*spoudaios*) mimesis that would arouse pity and fear (Aristotle *Poetics* 1449b23–28), while comedy was concerned with the ridiculous (*geloion*—*Poetics* 1449a31–36). Tragedy and comedy both developed from earlier poetry—those writers who inclined toward high and serious themes turned to tragedy, those with the opposite inclination to comedy. Finally in Aristotle's eyes there is the subject of the two genres: 'here is the distinction between comedy and tragedy—the former tends to represent people who are worse [*kheirous*] than people nowadays, the latter better ones' (*Poetics* 1448a17–18). Aristotle will qualify this distinction somewhat to identify the subjects of tragedy as not 'outstanding in goodness and justice', but 'better rather than worse' (*Poetics* 1453a8, 15–16). He will further qualify the definition to make comedy more about laughter and ridicule than about pure representation of evil or base characters (*Poetics* 1449a32–37):

> As we have stated, comedy is a representation of baser people, but not, however, wholly bad people; laughter is rather one manifestation of what is ugly. Laughter involves a fault or shame that is not painful or

[1] Taplin 1996, 188.

> destructive; take, for example, the comic mask, which is ugly and twisted but without pain.[2]
>
> ἡ δὲ κωμῳδία ἐστὶν ὥσπερ εἴπομεν μίμησις φαυλοτέρων μέν, οὐ μέντοι κατὰ πᾶσαν κακίαν, ἀλλὰ τοῦ αἰσχροῦ ἐστι τὸ γελοῖον μόριον. τὸ γὰρ γελοῖόν ἐστιν ἁμάρτημά τι καὶ αἶσχος ἀνώδυνον καὶ οὐ φθαρτικόν, οἷον εὐθὺς τὸ γελοῖον πρόσωπον αἰσχρόν τι καὶ διεστραμμένον ἄνευ ὀδύνης.

Comedy will display characters that are inferior, ugly, twisted, with defects, performing shameful actions, but for the purposes of laughter.[3]

In his *Nicomachean Ethics* (1128a22–25), written incidentally before the advent of Menander and 'New' Comedy, Aristotle distinguishes 'older' comedies (*palaioi*) from 'modern' ones (*kainoi*) by the nature of their humor:

> And one might observe [this] from earlier and modern comic poets: for the former *aiskhrologia* was a source of humor, but for the latter it is rather *huponoia.* This makes no small difference where propriety is concerned.
>
> ἴδοι δ' ἄν τις ἐκ τῶν κωμῳδιῶν τῶν παλαιῶν καὶ τῶν καινῶν· τοῖς μὲν γὰρ ἦν γελοῖον ἡ αἰσχρολογία, τοῖς δὲ μᾶλλον ἡ ὑπονοία· διαφέρει δ' οὐ μικρὸν ταῦτα πρὸς εὐσχημοσύνην.

Aiskhrologia is not a term used with any great frequency in surviving texts of the classical period,[4] but one critical passage for our purpose occurs at Plato *Republic* 395e, where the guardians in training should not imitate:

> … inferior men, so it would seem, cowards and those behaving in the opposite fashion to what we have just described, using bad language and making fun of one another and employing *aiskhrologia.*
>
> ἄνδρας κακούς, ὡς ἔοικεν, δειλούς τε καὶ τὰ ἐναντία πράττοντας ὧν νῦν δὴ εἴπομεν, κακηγοροῦντάς τε καὶ κωμῳδοῦντας ἀλλήλους καὶ αἰσχρολογοῦντας.

In the previous line Plato has forbidden the guardians to imitate 'a working woman or a woman in love or a woman giving birth', which more than one critic has related to Aristophanes' well-known description of Euripides' drama at *Frogs* 1043–1044. Plato clearly has drama in

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[2] All translations are my own.

[3] Taplin 1996 adds three further distinctions to his earlier emphasis on the dramatic illusion: the chorus (in tragedy 'limited and generally predictable'—192), the gods ('in comedy … all too human, in tragedy all too unhuman'—194), closures (in comedy closed, in tragedy open).

[4] The most recent studies are Halliwell 2004 and Rosen 2006a.

mind here and his linking of the significant verb *kômôidein* with *aiskhrologia* will anticipate Aristotle's comments in his *Nicomachean Ethics*.

Halliwell[5] sees the term as indicating 'indecent language' in three areas: (i) what we would call 'obscenity', (ii) *ad hominem* humor, and (iii) subjects with a religious taboo about them.[6] Aristotle in this passage goes on to assert that 'the joke [*skômma*] is a certain sort of abusive insult [*loidoria*], and the lawgivers prohibit [us] from insulting certain things'. *Huponoia*, on the other hand, is 'subtlety' or 'innuendo' (although this latter term usually translates the Greek word *emphasis*)—the point will be made by various ancient sources that comedy continued to make fun of targets, but after Old Comedy such targets were not political or personal. An especially clear example of this occurs in Platonius' first treatise (*On the Different Sorts of Comic Poets* 53–58 Perusino):

> The themes of Old Comedy were these: to rebuke generals and jurors who did not judge fairly and those who had amassed wealth unjustly and those who had chosen a wicked way of life. But Middle Comedy abandoned such themes and turned to literary subjects, such as making fun of something Homer said ⟨badly⟩ or some tragic poet.
>
> ὑποθέσεις μὲν γὰρ τῆς παλαιᾶς κωμῳδίας ἦσαν αὗται· τὸ στρατηγοῖς ἐπιτιμᾶν καὶ δικασταῖς οὐκ ὀρθῶς δικάζουσι καὶ χρήματα συλλέγουσιν ἐξ ἀδικίας τισὶ καὶ μοχθηρὸν ἐπανῃρημένοις βίον. ἡ δὲ μέση κωμῳδία ἀφῆκε τὰς τοιαύτας ὑποθέσεις, ἐπὶ δὲ τὸ σκώπτειν ἱστορίας, οἷον διασύρειν Ὅμηρον εἰπόντα τι ⟨οὐκ εὖ⟩ ἢ τὸν δεῖνα τῆς τραγῳδίας ποιητήν.

This, then, will be the subject of this chapter, the saying of 'bad things' about people in the comedy of Aristophanes.[7]

Although a few ancient writers admired Old Comedy for its style and pure Attic language,[8] for the vast majority Old Comedy was defined and characterized principally by personal humor.[9] Seneca's words

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[5] Halliwell 2004, 117.

[6] Rosen 2006a, 2 n. 3 takes the term as referring 'to sexual or scatological obscenity', although the term could be used more broadly as well, arguing that Aristotle was associating it with *agroikia*.

[7] Lysias fr. 53 gives a good instance of comedy's ability to say 'shameful things', à propos of the poet and comic target, Cinesias: 'Is this not the man who has committed such offenses against the gods, of a sort that it is shameful (*aiskhron*) for others even to mention, but which you hear from the comic poets year in, year out'. Notice that the context is one of personal humor, Cinesias being one of comedy's favorite targets at the end of the fifth century (*Av.* 1374ff., *Ra.* 153, 1437, *Ec.* 330, Strattis frr. 14–22 from his *Cinesias*).

[8] Such as [Plato] *Epigram* 14; Dionysius of Halicarnassus *On Imitation* 6.2; and Quintilian 10.1.65.

[9] A quick survey reveals the following descriptions: Horace *Ars Poetica* 284 [*turpiter*

set in the mouth of Socrates sum up well this view of Old Comedy: 'that whole band of comic poets poured out their poisoned wit against me', *tota illa comicorum manus in me venenatos sales suos effudit—de Beata Vita* 27.2. There was also a recurring assumption that these targets deserved their comic notoriety, that these were 'bad' people, Hor. *Satires* 1.4.3–5:

> if anyone deserved to be mentioned,
> … they [the comic poets] would single him out with great freedom
>
> siquis erat dignus describi,
> … multa cum libertate notabant

or we may compare Cicero's allowance[10] that we can allow comedy to attack *populares improbos*, although he adds that this is more properly the duty of a censor, or the passage from Platonius quoted above. Personal humor, and therefore Old Comedy, had a redeeming social value in that it said 'bad' things about 'bad' people.

One ancient critic would seem to be absent from this list, one whom we might have expected to have highlighted the 'bad' language of Old Comedy, and that is Plato. He does claim in *Apology* (18d, 19c) and *Phaedo* (70c) that Socrates' unfavorable image is due to the caricatures in comedy, especially that in Aristophanes' *Clouds* (*Apology* 19c),[11] but when he talks more generally and more seriously about comedy,[12] it is not so much its personal humor that is bothering him, but comedy's preoccupation with *to geloion* and *bômolokhia*—in other words it is silly and ridiculous, as opposed to the serious nature of tragedy. At *Laws* 816, Plato refers to 'ugly bodies and ugly actions and those who twist and turn in comic fashion for laughter's sake' and defines comedy loosely as 'laughable amusements' (περὶ γέλωτα παίγνια).[13] Here he uses also the

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nocendi], *Satires* 1.4.1–7 [*multa cum libertate notabant*]; Cicero *de Re Publica* 4.10 fr. 11 [*ut quod vellet comoedia de quo vellet nominatim diceret,…*Cicero goes on to use the verbs *vexavit, laesit, violari, notari, male dicere*]; Quintilian 10.1.65 [*praecipua in insectandis vitiis*]; Evanthius 16 [*res gestae a civibus palam … decantabantur*]; Lucian *Fisherman* 25 and Platonius 1.60, 64, 67 Perusino [διασύρηται—'mangle', 'tear apart'], Lucian *Anacharsis* 22 [ὀνειδιζόμενοι]; Dion of Prusa 33.9 [κακῶς ἀκούειν]; [Plutarch] *Ethica* 854D [τὰ βλάσφημα καὶ πικρά]; Aelius Aristides 40.761 [λέγειν κακῶς].

[10] Cic. *Rep.* 4.10.

[11] Mitscherling 2003 argues that 'a certain comic poet' at *Phaedo* 70c is Eupolis, citing frr. 386 and 395. On the picture of Socrates in the comic poets the best study is that by Patzer 1994.

[12] E.g. Pl. *Phlb.* 48a, *R.* 395–396, 606c and in *Laws* 816–817, 935–936.

[13] Halliwell 2004, 126 cites Hyperides' attack on Philippides (*Against Philippides* 7) for introducing physical antics and comic language into his oratorical performance (κορδακίζων καὶ γελωτοποιῶν).

same opposition of σπουδαῖος and γέλοιος that Aristotle will use later in *Poetics* (1448b23–28), tragedy being 'a mimesis of a serious [σπουδαῖος] action', and comedy of a ridiculous one [γέλοιος]. Even at *Laws* 935–936, where Plato *is* concerned with a law on personal humor,[14] he begins by assuming that the principal aim of the comic poet is 'to say laughable things' (γέλοια λέγειν—935cd).

Now one would not expect a comic poet to describe his craft and technique as κακῶς λέγειν or in any of the other negative terms presented above. At *Acharnians* 503 the poet, thinly disguised through his chief character Dicaeopolis, takes pains to refute the charge made by Cleon, 'I say bad things of the city', (τὴν πόλιν κακῶς λέγω). Later at 631 the same event is described in even stronger terms: 'he assaults the people', (τὸν δῆμον καθυβρίζει).[15] Three times in *Thesmophoriazusae* the poet Euripides is said 'to say bad things' about the women (85, 182, 475); again the sense is essentially something negative rather than complimentary, but Aristophanes nicely deflects this by insisting that what Euripides is saying about women is true. On one occasion, however, Aristophanes quite neatly reverses the natural pejorative sense of κακῶς λέγειν. At *Acharnians* 647–651 the chorus record an imaginary question from the King of Persia:

> And when the King of Persia put the embassy of the Spartans to the test
> and asked them first which of the two [Spartans or Athenians] were superior at sea
> and then about which of the two this poet of ours said many bad things.
> For he said that these people had been much improved
> and would clearly prevail in the war since they had such an advisor.

> ὅτε καὶ βασιλεὺς Λακεδαιμονίων τὴν πρεσβείαν βασανίζων
> ἠρώτησεν πρῶτα μὲν αὐτοὺς πότεροι ταῖς ναυσὶ κρατοῦσιν,
> εἶτα δὲ τοῦτον τὸν ποιητὴν ποτέρους εἴποι κακὰ πολλά·
> τούτους γὰρ ἔφη τοὺς ἀνθρώπους πολὺ βελτίους γεγενῆσθαι
> καὶ τῷ πολέμῳ πολὺ νικήσειν τοῦτον ξύμβουλον ἔχοντας.

Saying 'bad things' (κακά) about the city, and especially about its political leaders, is the means by which a comic poet can improve his

[14] 'For any poet of comedy, or iambic, or of lyric poetry let it not be allowed for him either in word or allusion, either with or without animus, to make fun of (*kômôidein*) any of the citizens' (935e). Plato seems to backtrack somewhat with his subsequent allowance (referring to 816) that 'those to whom permission has been granted, as mentioned before, to make jokes at one another, it is allowed to do so without animus and in jest (*paidia*), but not with serious intent or in passion'.

[15] The extent of and restrictions on comedy's freedom of speech have been the subject of many studies—the most recent (with full bibliography) is Sommerstein 2004.

fellow-citizens. This would be Aristophanes' claim for a redeeming social value for his comedy.[16]

Aristophanes generally uses milder terms to describe making fun of his comic targets. First there is the verb κωμῳδεῖν which will become the most commonly used term in the scholia and later critics. It can just mean 'have fun' (as at *Plutus* 557 'you are trying to poke fun and make jokes, with no concern for serious matters', σκώπτειν πειρᾷ καὶ *κωμῳδεῖν* τοῦ σπουδάζειν ἀμελήσας) or 'make something the subject of comedy' (*Acharnians* 655—ὡς *κωμῳδήσει* τὰ δίκαια), but more commonly means 'to make fun of in comedy'—as at *Wasps* 1025–1026:

> not even if some lover, having fallen out with his boyfriend, came to him wanting his boyfriend to be made fun of
>
> οὐδ' εἴ τις ἐραστὴς
> *κωμῳδεῖσθαι* παιδιχ' ἑαυτοῦ μισῶν ἔσπευσε πρὸς αὐτόν

Similarly at *Peace* 751: οὐκ ἰδιώτας ἀνθρωπίσκους *κωμῳδῶν* οὐδὲ γυναίκας, 'making fun, not of insignificant little men or women'—Aristophanes then goes on to describe his choice of Cleon as comic target in terms of a labor worthy of Heracles, or in the law imagined by Plato (*Laws* 935e), 'that no one should make fun (κωμῳδεῖν) of any citizen'. As already mentioned, *kômôidoumoi* becomes one of the standard terms in the scholarly literature about Old Comedy to describe those named in comedy.[17] Often the fuller phrase ὀνομαστὶ κωμῳδεῖν is found, but in one often cited passage (Σ *Acharnians* 67) κωμῳδεῖν on its own can refer to 'to make fun of by name':

> 'in the archonship of Euthymenes' [437/6]—this was the archon in whose year the decree *mê kômôidein* was rescinded.[18]
>
> 'ἐπ' Εὐθυμένους ἄρχοντος'—οὗτος ὁ ἄρχων ἐφ' οὗ κατελύθη τὸ ψήφισμα τὸ περὶ τοῦ μὴ κωμῳδεῖν.

[16] On personal insult and abuse in Old Comedy see the studies of Degani 1993, Storey 1998, Zanetto 2001, several of the essays in Ercolani 2002, Cottone 2005, Ercolani 2006, and Zimmermann 2006.

[17] As at Σ *Birds* 11 (of Execestides), 17 (of Tharrelides), 151 (of Melanthius), 168 (of Teleas) etc. The most common terms are the neutral verbs μέμνηται and μνημονεύεται.

[18] The scholiast reveals that the decree *mê kômôidein* was passed 'in the archonship of Morychides' [440/39 BCE] and repealed in the archonship of Euthymenes [437/6 BCE]. As we know from a Roman inscription (*IG Urb. Rom.* 216.4) that Callias produced his *Satyroi* in 437, the decree cannot simply refer to a cessation in comic production.

More common is Aristophanes' use of σκῶμμα or σκώπτειν for the comedian's activity of saying 'bad things' about his victims. While σκώπτειν can just mean 'make jokes',[19] it more often possesses the sense of 'make jokes at', 'poke fun at'.[20] At *Clouds* 540 this comedy 'does not poke fun at bald men' (οὐδ' ἔσκωψε τοὺς φαλακρούς), ironic since Aristophanes would speak of himself at *Peace* 765–774 as the 'bald poet', and at *Frogs* 417 the iambics aimed at Archedemus, Callias, and Cleisthenes are introduced: 'do you [spectators] want us to poke fun [σκώψωμεν] at Archedemus?' Thus I wonder whether we should read into all the comic uses of σκώπτειν the sense of personal jokes, of making fun *of* someone or something. For example, at *Frogs* 374–375 we can interpret κἀπισκώπτων καὶ παίζων καὶ χλευάζων with distinct senses, 'poking fun' and 'fooling around' and 'mocking'.[21] We learn that the old comic poet Magnes 'was rejected in his old age, because he failed in σκώπτειν' (*Knights* 520–525):

> Being well aware of what happened to Magnes, when he grew old and grey,
> Magnes who had put up the most victory-trophies over his rivals,
> making every sort of sound for you, strumming the lyre, flapping his wings,
> playing the Lydian, buzzing like a fly, dyed like a frog,
> he did not succeed, but in the end, in his old age, when he wasn't young any more,
> he was rejected because he failed in *skôptein*.

> τοῦτο μὲν εἰδὼς ἅπαθε Μάγνης ἅμα ταῖς πολιαῖς κατιούσαις
> ὃς πλεῖστα χορῶν τῶν ἀντιπάλων νίκης ἔστησε τροπαῖα,
> πάσας δ' ὑμᾶς φωνὰς ἱεὶς καὶ ψάλλων καὶ πτερυγίζων
> καὶ λυδίζων καὶ ψηνίζων καὶ βαπτόμενος βατραχείοις
> οὐκ ἐξήρεσκεν, ἀλλὰ τελευτῶν ἐπὶ γήρως, οὐ γὰρ ἐφ' ἥβης
> ἐξεβλήθη πρεσβύτης ὤν, ὅτι τοῦ σκώπτειν ἀπελείφθη.

Could this be expanded in the following way? Magnes' great period belonged to the 470s and 460s,[22] before the advent of personal-political

[19] As at *Wasps* 567—'some [defendants] make jokes', or *Peace* 173—'I am really afraid, I'm not joking now'.

[20] *Frogs* 58—'don't make fun of me, brother', *Wasps* 542—'being laughed at in the street'. 'σκώπτειν is often making fun of someone, not just making jokes' (Dover 1995, 198).

[21] This is the only instance in extant Aristophanes of χλευάζειν, but it is found in a similar coupling of terms at Aristotle *Rhetoric* 1379a29, τοῖς καταγελῶσι καὶ χλευάζουσι καὶ σκώπτουσι. In the later critical tradition it has overtones of 'irony' and 'derision', and we might want to understand a sense of sarcasm.

[22] Magnes (*PCG* V 626–631), who had eleven victories, the most we know of for any

comedy under Cratinus in the 440s and 430s.[23] *Knights* 522–523 suggests that Magnes' comedy was largely primitive stuff with men performing as animals, and thus if he produced a comedy in his later years and it paled in comparison with the more aggressive comedies of the 430s, was he rejected because 'he failed … to make personal jokes'?

Occasionally Aristophanes resorts to stronger words to describe the poet's attacks of his personal targets and they serve to raise the profile of the comedian's craft (as at *Acharnians* 649):

- ἐπιθέσθαι, ἐπιχειρεῖν at *Wasps* 1029–1030: 'he says that, when he first began to produce his plays, he did not attack [ἐπιθέσθαι] mere mortals, but with the passion of Heracles took on [ἐπιχειρεῖν] the very greatest';
- λυπεῖν at *Knights* 1269, 'to hurt again Thoumantis the hungry, with willing heart';
- and finally λοιδορῆσαι, an interesting term, since in comedy λοιδορεῖν ('insult') or its middle λοιδορεῖσθαι ('bicker') are not usually positive terms (e.g., *Frogs* 857–858—'it is not seemly for poets to bicker like bread-wives', λοιδορεῖσθαι δ' οὐ πρέπει / ἄνδρας ποιητὰς ὥσπερ ἀρτοπώλιδας.[24] But twice Aristophanes uses this rather strong term of the comic poet's attack on a target: (i) at *Peace* 651–656, when Hermes mentions Cleon, Trygaios interrupts that since Cleon is dead and therefore now in Hermes' care, 'you are insulting [λοιδορεῖς] one of your own', and (ii) at *Knights* 1274–1275, in an *epirrhêma* devoted to personal abuse, the poet claims 'there is nothing reprehensible about insulting (λοιδορῆσαι) wicked men, but rather honorable for good men when you think about it carefully'.

Old comedian, won at the Dionysia of 472 BCE (*IG* II^2 2318.7). On *IG* ii^2 2325, which records victors in chronological order of their first victory, Magnes occurs immediately before Euphronius, whose sole victory belongs to 458 BCE (*IG* II^2 2318.46–48, *IG* II^2 2325.48).

[23] On the role of Cratinus in the personal and political development of Old Comedy see (among others) Rosen 1988, Halliwell 1991, Sommerstein 2004, and Rusten 2006.

[24] Remember that Aristotle (*Nicomachean Ethics* 1128a30–31) has defined a joke (*skômma*) as a form of *loidoria* and there are laws against 'insulting certain things' at Athens. 'Perhaps they should forbid joking (*skôptein*) as well'.

2. *Invective and κακός*

With this as introduction I propose to examine the actual words that a comic poet puts in the mouths of his characters saying 'bad things' both about each other and about his targets outside the drama. As one would expect, there is a vocabulary of colorful insults, used metaphorically in the same way that in modern English one may call someone an 'idiot', without assigning one's target a certain level on the I.Q. scale, or 'bastard' without actually meaning to comment on the marital state (or lack thereof) of the victim's parents. And we do get certain vivid and descriptive terms such as: πατραλοίας ('father-beater'), καταπύγων ('arse-bandit'), λωποδύτης ('clothes-thief'), εὐρύπρωκτος ('with gaping ass-hole'—the *agôn* in *Clouds* is resolved by showing that the majority of politicians, poets, and spectators are in fact *euruprôktoi*), βωμολόχος ('buffoon'), and τοιχώρυχος ('burglar'—the last, interestingly, used mainly in *Plutus*). In places we get these insults grouped together for effect, as at:

- *Clouds* 909–911—'you are a shameless asshole … and a buffoon … and a thug', καταπύγων εἶ κἀναίσχυντος … καὶ βωμολόχος … καὶ πατραλοίας;
- *Clouds* 1327–1332—'you wretch, you thug, you burglar … sack-arse … you absolute wretch', ὦ μιαρὲ καὶ πατραλοῖα καὶ τοιχωρύχε … ὦ λακκόπρωκτε … ὦ μιαρώτατε;
- *Frogs* 773—'when Euripides came down, he headed straight for the clothes-thieves and the pick-pockets and the thugs and the burglars', ὅτε δὴ κατῆλθ' Εὐριπίδης, ἐπεδείκνυτο / τοῖς λωποδύταις καὶ τοῖσι βαλλαντιοτόμοις / καὶ τοῖσι πατραλοίαισι καὶ τοιχωρύχοις.

But I am more concerned with the commonly used adjectives of pejorative intent. First there is the term that dominates this volume: κακός, with its various forms and compounds. It occurs well over 200 times in extant Aristophanes, but it is fair to say that the majority of uses are as the adverb (κακῶς) or in the neuter ('bad thing(s)'). Idiomatic phrases here include:

- as a curse with forms of the verb ὄλλυμι: 'I will destroy you utterly', ἀπολῶ σε κακῶς (*Clouds* 899); 'may you die horribly', κακῶς ἀπόλοιο (*Birds* 85); 'that god-damned creature', τῷ κάκιστ' ἀπολουμένῳ (*Peace* 2);
- as a neuter noun meaning 'trouble' or 'problem', especially in the phrase τί τὸ κακόν; 'what's the matter?' (*Thesmophoriazusae* 610);

– in certain idiomatic phrases, such as κακῶς πράττειν ('be badly off') or κακῶς λέγειν ('say bad things about'), or κακῶς ἀκούειν ('have a bad reputation'), and κακὸς κακῶς ('bad … badly').

When κακός is used adjectively in comedy, it has an air of hierarchy about it, possessing the sense of 'inferior'; it carries with it a scale from higher value to lower value, on which κακός occupies an inferior position. It means 'bad', not primarily in the sense of moral worth (that, as we shall see, will be carried by πονηρός), but in the sense of 'of lesser value or ability'. Thus at *Knights* 2, one could render κακῶς Παφλαγόνα τὸν νεώνητον κακόν as 'this newly purchased wicked Paphlagon', but more probably it means 'this newly purchased and worthless Paphlagon', remembering the comic caricature of the demagogue as coming not from the ranks of the *kaloi k'agathoi* or the *khrêstoi*, but from the inferior strata of Athenian society. Paphlagon is thus a slave of inferior quality. At *Thesmophoriazusae* 169 'Uncle' takes Agathon's dictum, 'one must create things in accordance with one's nature' (167), and applies it to the tragic poets, Philocles, Xenocles, and Theognis. Of the second he concludes, ὁ δ' αὖ Ξενοκλέης κακὸς κακῶς ποιεῖ, which means not 'that's why that bad man Xenocles writes such morally degenerate drama', but 'that's why that second-rate Xenocles writes such second-rate poetry'. So too at *Clouds* 553–554, Εὔπολις μὲν τὸν Μαρικᾶν πρώτιστον παρείλκυσεν / ἐκστρέψας τοὺς ἡμετέρους Ἱππέας κακὸς κακῶς, becomes 'that lousy Eupolis dragged his lousy *Marikas* on stage, turning our *Knights* inside out'. This is not always the case, however, with κακός—there are places in comedy where it should primarily mean 'morally bad' rather than 'inferior', as at *Peace* 303 ('freed from battle-ranks and evil purple cloaks', τάξεων ἀπαλλαγέντες καὶ κακῶν φοινικικῶν), but even here the 'purple cloaks' anticipate the extended caricature of the cowardly *taxiarkhos* at *Peace* 1172–1190, and we might want to see a note of 'cowardly' in κακός here. κακός as 'cowardly' does occur in comedy, a good instance being Eupolis fr. 35 (*Astrateutoi*):

> Peisandros served on the Paktolos campaign,
> and there he was the most cowardly (κάκιστος) man in the army.
>
> Πείσανδρος εἰς Πακτωλὸν ἐστρατεύετο
> κἀνταῦθα τῆς στρατιᾶς *κάκιστος* ἦν ἀνήρ

But at *Plutus* 107–110, given the link with μοχθηρία, we do need a moral sense for κακός:

PLUTUS. That's what they all say. But when they actually
get hold of me and become rich,
they totally outdo themselves in vice.
CHREMYLUS. That may be so, but they are not all bad.

ΠΛ. ταυτὶ λέγουσι πάντες· ἡνίκ' ἂν δέ μου
τύχωσ' ἀληθῶς καὶ γένωνται πλούσιοι,
ἀτεχνῶς ὑπερβάλλουσι τῇ μοχθηρίᾳ.
ΧΡ. ἔχει μὲν οὕτως, εἰσὶ δ' οὐ πάντες *κακοί.*

So then in assessing the sense of κακός, when applied to individuals in comedy, we should look for the sense of 'inferior' in the word, as well as or in preference to the sense of 'morally bad' or 'evil'. So at *Thesmophoriazusae* 837, we get 'an inferior helmsman' (κυβερνήτην *κακόν*), and we may wonder in the parabasis at 785–813 whether the women are saying 'tell us, if we are a κακόν ['an evil'], why do you marry us, if we are truly a κακόν ['evil']?', or 'if we are something inferior, why do you marry us, if we are truly an inferior creature?' (εἰ κακόν ἐσμεν, τί γαμεῖθ' ἡμᾶς, εἴπερ ἀληθῶς κακόν ἐσμεν). If this seems an unlikely suggestion, remember that later at line 801 the women will begin a game of comparison in order to determine who is superior and who inferior—repeatedly using of men *kheirôn*, the comparative form of κακός meaning 'inferior'.

3. *Πονηρός*

It is not κακός that comedy uses to denote what we would call 'evil' or 'wicked', but rather πονηρός. If κακός carries the primary force of inferiority or cowardice, πονηρός carries the force of wickedness, although we shall see that it does not always need to be this strong. The word is not used as often as κακός (85 instances in Aristophanes), but it does carry more of a punch. In the passage from *Thesmophoriazusae* cited above (836–837) we get a collection of epithets carrying various sorts of pejorative force:

And if some woman is the mother of a cowardly and bad son,
either a bad trierarch or an incompetent helmsman …

εἰ δὲ δειλὸν καὶ *πονηρὸν* ἄνδρα τις τέκοι γυνή,
ἢ τριήραρχον *πονηρὸν* ἢ κυβερνήτην κακόν …

Sommerstein[25] has a good note here:

> A 'bad' trierarch would most likely be one guilty either of disobeying superior orders through reluctance to endanger his ship (cf. X. *HG* 6.2.34), or of failing to keep the ship in good repair through parsimony or sloth.

But the κυβερνήτην κακόν is just someone poor at his job. In comedy the polar opposite of πονηρός tends to be χρηστός.[26] A particularly revealing passage is *Ec.* 177–178:

> one of them may be honest for one day,
> but he is wicked for ten
>
> κἄν τις ἡμέραν μίαν
> χρηστὸς γένηται, δέκα πονηρὸς γίγνεται

The term is often (but not exclusively) aimed at popular politicians and public figures: of Cleon/Paphlagon and the Sausage-Seller throughout *Knights*, of Hyperbolus at *Peace* 684, Agyrrhius at *Ecclesiazusae* 185, Cleigenes at *Frogs* 710, the *sukophantês* at *Plutus* 920, 939, *rhêtores* at *Acharnians* 699, of current political leaders at *Frogs* 1456 and *Ecclesiazusae* 177, and of a *sunêgoros* at fr. 424. Such an observation fits well with the thesis of de Ste Croix (1972) and Sommerstein (1996a) that Aristophanes belongs to the Right and that he especially targets popular political figures on what we would call 'the Left'.[27]

One particular target is singled out as the supreme example of *ponêria*. At *Knights* 1264 the chorus launches into the second parabasis, devoted completely to attacks on a variety of comedy's *bêtes noires*. They begin the *epirrhêma* with a neat opposition of πονηρός and χρηστός and follow this with a rather left-handed compliment at Arignotus. But then they turn to Arignotus' infamous brother, Ariphrades πονηρός (1281), who is not only πονηρός, not only παμπονηρός, but he has invented something new: 'he abuses his own tongue with shameful pleasures' (1284). There may be more going on here than just singling out a notorious sexual pervert, since Aristotle (*Poetics* 1458b31) tells us of

[25] Sommerstein 1994, 209.

[26] *Eq.* 1274–1275, *Lys.* 351, *Ra.* 1456, *Ec.* 177–178.

[27] The fullest study is that of Rosenbloom 2002, who explores comedy's exploitation of the dynamic tension between *ponêros* and *khrêstos*, concluding that 'the label *ponêros* … was applied to the emerging commercial-judicial elite to thwart its rise from economic prominence to political leadership, and hence to undermine the hegemony of the demos it represented' (337).

an Ariphrades, 'who would make fun of [ἐκωμῴδει] the tragic poets because they used language that no one would use in conversation'. If this Ariphrades was a comic poet, as ἐκωμῴδει would suggest, then Aristophanes is attributing this πονηρία to one of his rivals. Remember that at *Wasps* 1274 Ariphrades' brothers are an actor and a lyre-player; a comic poet would not be out of place in this talented family.

The word has its ultimate origin in πόνος ('toil', 'labor') and there are places where it seems to mean less 'wicked' and more 'lower class' or 'common'. In fact at *Lysistrata* 350 we get explicitly ὦνδρες πόνῳ πόνηροι. There is a subtle force at work here: those from an inferior social background are expected to behave in a less than honorable moral manner, and by extension should not be trusted with political influence over the *dêmos*. πονηρός is contrasted with πλούσιοι ('rich') at *Plutus* 502, and with καλοὶ κἀγαθοί at *Knights* 186:

> SERVANT: You're not from good and noble stock, are you? S-S: No way, by the gods,
> but from *ponêroi*!
>
> ΟΙΚ. μῶν ἐκ καλῶν εἶ κἀγαθῶν; ΑΛ. μὰ τοὺς θεοὺς
> εἰ μὴ 'κ *πονηρῶν* γ'.

The exchange continues at *Knights* 180–181:

> But that's how you will become great, because you are *ponêros* and presumptuous and come from the agora.
>
> δι' αὐτὸ γάρ τοι τοῦτο καὶ γίγνει μέγας,
> ὁτιὴ *πονηρὸς* κἀξ ἀγορᾶς εἶ καὶ θρασύς.

And at *Knights* 337 (λέγ' ὅτι ἐκ πονηρῶν), we may want to take πονηρός as more like 'working class' or 'blue collar' rather than as 'morally wicked'. At *Frogs* 731 the current crop of politicians are described as 'bronze [as opposed to gold or silver], aliens, red-haired, πονηροῖς κἀκ πονηρῶν', which in view of comedy's caricature of demagogues could be translated as 'lower-class and sprung from lower class', although in both passages we would want to retain something of the moral sense as well. Rosenbloom 2002 demonstrates at length how the economic origins of the new politicians, 'whose wealth derived from production for exchange' (284), lead to the comedians' portrayal of them as *ponêroi*.

It was also the term on which Whitman (1964) based his analysis of the comic hero, as characterized and motivated by a dominant and attractive streak of *ponêria*. Whitman tended to take the word in a more positive manner, almost 'rogue' rather than 'villain'. Such is his reading

of *Wasps* 192—'you're a bad one, a past master and a rogue' (πονηρὸς εἶ πόρρω τέχνης καὶ παράβολος)—and of *Clouds* 1065–1066—'Hyperbolos … got many talents because of his *ponêria*' (Ὑπέρβολος … πλεῖν ἢ τάλαντα πολλὰ εἴληφε διὰ πονηρίαν). But I think that neither passage stands up to close scrutiny, since that from *Clouds* can just be making the same point as in *Plutus*, that the wicked prosper while the virtuous (*sôphrones*) do not. The reply of Philocleon at *Wasps* 193–195 shows that he has taken πονηρός in a negative sense, although he attributes to it its less common sense of 'bad' food:[28]

> Me, bad? By Zeus I'll have you know
> that right now I am at my very prime. Perhaps ⟨you'll realize that⟩
> when you've eaten an undercut of old juror.
>
> ἐγὼ *πονηρός*; οὐ μὰ Δί᾽ ἀλλ᾽ οὐκ οἶσθα σὺ
> νῦν μ᾽ ὄντ᾽ ἄριστον· ἀλλ᾽ ἴσως, ὅταν φάγῃς
> ὑπογάστριον γέροντος ἡλιαστικοῦ.

Although there may be places where the meaning of 'morally bad' or 'wicked' is tempered by sense of humor (much as in modern English something can be so 'bad' that it is 'good'), I think that we should take its occurrence in comedy as essentially meaning 'evil' or 'bad' with moral overtones.[29]

4. *Μοχθηρός*

In Aristotle's ethical treatises the epithet μοχθηρός assumes considerable importance as a basic term for 'bad' or 'wicked', as at *EN* 1110b27–30:

> Every wicked person [*mokhthêros*] does not know what he should do and what he should stay away from, and it is because of this lack of knowledge [*hamartia*] that they become unjust [*adikoi*] and bad [*kakoi*].
>
> ἀγνοεῖ μὲν οὖν πᾶς ὁ μοχθηρὸς ἃ δεῖ πράττειν καὶ ὧν ἀφεκτέον, καὶ διὰ τὴν τοιαύτην ἁμαρτίαν ἄδικοι καὶ ὅλως κακοὶ γίνονται.

But in Aristophanes it is rather less common than πονηρός (16 instances only). As one would expect from its ultimate origin in the noun *mokhthos*

[28] As at Plato *Gorgias* 464e ('of good [*khrêstôn*] and bad [*ponêrôn*] foods'), and very likely at *Wasps* 243, where Cleon has told the chorus to come 'with three days' worth of bad [*ponêran*] anger', where the military idiom would have 'three days' worth of food'.

[29] Dover 1995, 299 sees a sympathetic use of πονηρός in the phrase ὦ πόνηρε σύ ('you poor fellow') as at *Birds* 1648 (cf. *Frogs* 852, *Wasps* 977), quoting ancient sources for the change in accent for this sense.

('burden', 'weight'), it tends to mean 'something or someone who gives us grief or trouble'. A neat example occurs at *Thesmophoriazusae* 780–781, the only use of *mokhthos* in Aristophanes, 'as heralds of my troubles—alas, and what a trouble this 'r' is!' (κήρυκας ἐμῶν μόχθων· οἴμοι / τουτὶ τὸ ῥῶ μοχθηρόν). But the words also possess the negative moral sense that will be found in Aristotle. *Lysistrata* 1160 describes the warlike behavior of the Greeks toward one another as *mokhthêria*, Euripides at *Frogs* 1011 has 'turned good and noble citizens into the very wicked' (ἐκ χρηστῶν καὶ γενναίων μοχθηροτάτους ἀπέδειξας), and twice in *Plutus* (109, 159) *mokhthêria* means 'bad moral behavior'. Of *kômôidoumenoi* it is applied to the demagogue Archedemus at *Frogs* 421, 'and he is the leader of the wickedness up there' (κἄστιν τὰ πρῶτα τῆς ἐκεῖ μοχθηρίας); this would fit well with the use of *ponêros* of the demagogues by Aristophanes. But the most significant passage occurs at *Knights* 1304, of the demagogue Hyperbolus, 'that man, a wicked citizen, sour Hyperbolus' (ἄνδρα *μοχθηρὸν* πολίτην, ὀξίνην Ὑπέρβολον), significant because Thucydides uses very similar language over fifteen years later to introduce Hyperbolus into his narrative at 8.73:

> and a certain Athenian, Hyperbolus, a wicked person, who had been ostracized not because they feared his power or ability, but because of his evil behavior and the shame he brought upon the city.[30]
>
> καὶ Ὑπέρβολόν τέ τινα τῶν Ἀθηναίων, μοχθηρὸν ἄνθρωπον, ὠστρακισμένον, οὐ διὰ δυνάμεως καὶ ἀξιώματος φόβον ἀλλὰ διὰ πονηρίαν καὶ αἰσχύνην τῆς πόλεως

This is Thucydides' only use of the adjective μοχθηρός, and it does seem to have been reserved for the demagogue Hyperbolus. Perhaps the English 'loathsome' might catch something of the force intended.[31]

[30] Pl. Com. fr. 202 KA has a similar thing to say about Hyperbolus and ostracism: 'and indeed he did things appropriate to his character and not appropriate to his servile background, for it was for such men that ostracism was invented', καίτοι πέπραγε τῶν τρόπων μὲν ἄξια,/ αὑτοῦ δὲ καὶ τῶν στιγμάτων ἀνάξια,/ οὐ γὰρ τοιούτων οὕνεκ' ὄστραχ' ηὑρέθη.

[31] Dover 1995, 335 finds in the phrase ὦ μόχθηρε σύ (*Frogs* 1175, *Peace* 391, and a closely related passage at *Birds* 493) a sympathetic use of μοχθηρός akin to that for πονηρός, again with an alteration of the accent from the ultimate to the antepenultimate. See note 29.

5. *Αἰσχρός, πανοῦργος, μιαρός*

Aristotle identifies *aiskhrologia* as the principal means of humor of Old Comedy, but the adjective αἰσχρός itself is far less common in Old Comedy (about three dozen instances) than either κακός or πονηρός. Most of these are in the neuter, usually translated as 'it is shameful' or 'shameful thing(s)', but where it is applied to persons it tends to take on the undertone of 'ugly'. It is the word used in *Ecclesiazusae* of the ugly women whom the new law on equal sexual opportunity will favor (629, 705, 618–619, 625, 1078) and of the previous state of Demos before his rejuvenation at *Knights* 1321: 'I have boiled your Demos down and made him beautiful instead of ugly' (τὸν Δῆμον ἀφεψήσας ὑμῖν καλὸν ἐξ αἰσχροῦ πεποίηκα). On three occasions its polar opposite is καλός (*Knights* 1321, *Clouds* 1021–1022). When applied to *kômôidoumenoi* it is used of the 'shameful pleasures' invented by Ariphrades at *Knights* 1284, the treatment of Philocleon by 'that trickster Lysistratus', and the character and tragic poetry of Philocles at *Thesmophoriazusae* 168: 'that's why Philocles who's so ugly writes such ugly poetry!' (ταῦτ' ἄρ' ὁ Φιλοκλέης αἰσχρὸς ὢν αἰσχρῶς ποιεῖ).

More common (over 50 instances) as an insult is the epithet πανοῦργος, clearly the product of *pan* + *ergon*, literally 'all deed', someone capable of anything or one who will stop at nothing. The clear implication of such a combination is pejorative. Aristophanes uses the term most often of Cleon (both directly and as Paphlagon in *Knights*), pounding away especially at *Knights* 247–250:

> Get him, get the villain, the spirit who terrifies the cavalry,
> the master of infernal revenue, the black hole of thievery—
> villain, villain! I'll say it again and again,
> for this one has been a villain, again and again, all day long.
>
> παῖε παῖε τὸν πανοῦργον καὶ ταραξιππόστρατον
> καὶ τελώνην καὶ φάραγγα καὶ Χάρυβδιν ἁρπαγῆς
> καὶ πανοῦργον καὶ πανοῦργον· πολλάκις γὰρ αὔτ' ἐρῶ.
> καὶ γὰρ οὗτος ἦν πανοῦργος πολλάκις τῆς ἡμέρας

The other character repeatedly called πανοῦργος is Euripides' vulgar relative in *Thesmophoriazusae*, so described a dozen times, for his brazen attempt to infiltrate the meeting of the women and for daring to defend Euripides. Another cluster of uses centers around clever and misbehaving slaves (Cydoemus at *Peace* 283; Carion at *Plutus* 876, 1145; Xanthias at *Frogs* 35, and by extension the figures of Paphlagon and the Sausage-

Seller in *Knights*). Dover[32] sees both the 'open insolence' of comic slaves and 'the automatic abuse of slave by master' at work here.[33]

But one character is never called πανοῦργος, one whom you might think would be an obvious candidate to 'do anything' or 'stop at nothing', and that is Socrates. The word is one of Aristophanes' most powerful insults, reserved for low and outrageous characters, but Socrates is spared this. This may shed some light on what is called the 'Socrates-problem', the various critical interpretations of Aristophanes' comic portrait of Socrates.[34] To one school of critics *Clouds* is a bitter and motivated attack upon the 'new learning', to others it is a sympathetic and humorous joke that got away from its creator, to still others Aristophanes did not know the difference between Socrates and a sophist and would not have cared. Yet another interpretation sees Aristophanes' caricature as in fact reflecting an earlier and real interest by Socrates in natural philosophy. The comedian's avoidance of the term πανοῦργος for Socrates may be evidence against a hostile interpretation.

In a similar fashion πανοῦργος may help with what might be called 'the Euripides-problem'. Again critics have reacted very differently to the constant allusions to, parodies of, and the presence of Euripides and his plays in Aristophanes' comedy.[35] For some the comedian is deliberately hostile to this man who has cheapened and brought down the level of tragedy, for others Aristophanes is obsessed with Euripides and the comic depiction an enormous compliment. For still others *Frogs* represents a definite change in attitude. Aristophanes, like his chief character Dionysus, begins with a desire (*pothos*) for Euripides, but in

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32 Dover 1995, 45.

33 Dover 1995, 194 regards the word as 'a very general term of abuse', citing *Knights* 249–250. But the examples that I have cited suggest a more restricted usage: Cleon, Euripides and his 'Uncle', and slaves are up to no good. A natural translation in English is not easy to find. 'Scoundrel' or 'misbehaving' are too mild; perhaps the closest is the British 'villain' or the American 'crook'.

34 Discussions of the 'Socrates-problem' may be found at Dover 1968, l–lvii, Nussbaum 1980, Reckford 1987, 392–402, Heath 1987, 9–12, Hubbard 1991, 88–112 (with earlier bibliography on 88–89, nn. 4–5), and Silk 2000, 358–366. It is becoming clear now that the very qualities that are attributed to Socrates (*sophia*, *dexiotês*, an appreciation of things 'new' [*kaina*]) are also those claimed by Aristophanes for his comedy and that the issues behind *Clouds* may not so clear-cut as previously thought—see Bowie 1993, 102–133 here.

35 For a discussion of earlier studies see Storey (1987, 1992. Other discussions of note include Hubbard 1991, 199–219, Slater 2002, 181–206, Rosen 2005, 2006b. Silk 2000 has seen Aristophanes' obsession with tragedy, and with Euripides in particular, as underlying his entire concept of comedy.

the ultimate decision chooses the 'good' poet Aeschylus over the 'clever' poet Euripides. To support this third option I would adduce both the little song of the chorus at 1482–1499 in which Euripides is signally and unnecessarily attacked after his defeat for 'abandoning the best of tragedy' and the use of πανοῦργος of both Euripides (80, 1520) and those associated with him (781, 1015).

The final term that I shall consider is μιαρός (70 or so instances), which has a fairly consistent meaning of 'wretched' or 'despicable', especially frequent in one-on-one confrontations in comedy.[36] One of the neatest examples occurs at *Frogs* 465–466 as the culmination of Aiacus' thundering denunciation of 'Heracles':

> You disgusting, shameless, outrageous creature,
> wretched, totally wretched, most wretched of all.

> ὦ βδελυρὲ κἀναίσχυντε καὶ τολμηρὲ σὺ
> καὶ *μιαρὲ* καὶ παμ*μίαρε* καὶ *μιαρώτατε*.

Almost the identical words begin Hermes' 'greeting' of Trygaeus on his arrival at Olympus on the dung-beetle, followed by a sequence playing on *miaros* (*Peace* 182–187):

> HERMES: You disgusting, outrageous, and shameless creature,
> wretched and totally wretched and most wretched of all,
> how did you turn up here, you most wretched of the wretched,
> what is your name? Tell me now! TRYGAIOS: Most wretched.
> HER. And what country are you from, tell me! TR. Most wretched.
> HER. And who is your father? TR. My father? Most wretched.

> ΕΡ. ὦ βδελυρὲ καὶ τολμηρὲ κἀναίσχυντε σὺ
> καὶ *μιαρὲ* καὶ παμ*μίαρε* καὶ *μιαρώτατε*,
> πῶς δεῦρ' ἀνῆλθες ὦ *μιαρῶν μιαρώτατε*;
> τί σοί ποτ' ἔστ' ὄνομ'; οὐκ ἐρεῖς; ΤΡ. *μιαρώτατος*.
> ΕΡ. ποδαπὸς τὸ γένος δ' εἶ; φράζε μοι. ΤΡ. *μιαρώτατος*.
> ΕΡ. πατὴρ δέ σοι τίς ἐστ'; ΤΡ. ἐμοί; *μιαρώτατος*.

Repeated recipients of the word are Paphlagon in *Knights* (125, 303, 823, 831, 1224), Strepsiades' son in *Clouds* (1325, 1327, 1332, 1388—all in the vocative), and Dicaeopolis in *Acharnians* (182, 282, 285, 557—in the eyes of the chorus). Although most instances of the word occur in head-to-head confrontations, there are some *kômôidoumenoi* so described. The interesting mix includes: Demostratus a political leader involved

[36] Nearly half of the Aristophanic instances are in the vocative.

in launching the Sicilian expedition (*Lys.* 397), Chaerephon the close friend of Socrates (*Clouds* 1465), and the tragedians Morsimus and Melanthius (*Peace* 812).[37]

6. *Conclusion*

I would end by citing two passages from Aristophanes where the comic poet provides an *apologia pro sua maledictione.* Both come from the parodos of *Frogs*, the entry of the chorus whose identity has been foretold by Heracles at 155–158:

> HERACLES: And ⟨you will see⟩ happy bands
> of men and women and ⟨hear⟩ much clapping of hands.
> DIONYSUS: Who are these? HERACLES: These are the Initiates.

> ΗΡ. καὶ θιάσους εὐδαίμονας
> ἀνδρῶν γυναικῶν καὶ κρότον χειρῶν πολύν.
> ΔΙ. οὗτοι δὲ δὴ τίνες εἰσίν; ΗΡ. οἱ μεμυημένοι.

But like many comic choruses their identity is in flux, moving easily from its dramatic identity of *mustai* to that of a comic chorus generally.[38] Thus when at *Frogs* 686 they profess 'it is right for the sacred chorus to teach and give good advice to the city', are they speaking within their character as initiates or as the comic chorus, and thus as the mouthpiece of the poet himself? In a parabasis we might well expect the latter. In a little song during their formal entry (parodos) at 391–395 the chorus pray:

> Grant me to say many funny things,
> and many serious ones, and
> that I wear the crown after having had
> some fun worthy of your festival,
> making jokes [σκώψαντα], and winning the prize.

> καὶ πολλὰ μὲν γέλοιά μ' εἰ-
> πεῖν, πολλὰ δὲ σπουδαῖα, καὶ
> τῆς σῆς ἑορτῆς ἀξίως
> παίσαντα καὶ σκώψαντα νι-
> κήσαντα ταινιοῦσθαι.

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[37] Both the mention of Demostratus (ὁ θεοῖσιν ἐχθρὸς καὶ μιαρὸς Χολοζύγης) and that of Chaerephon (τὸν Χαιρεφῶντα τὸν μιαρόν) seem distinctly formal.

[38] Sommerstein 1996b, 190 sees this double identity as operating throughout the parodos.

Now there is nothing unusual about a dramatic chorus moving from the plural 'we' to a singular 'I', but here the masculine forms of the participle agreeing with 'me' suggest the figure of the poet himself making a typically comic appeal for success. Note the prayer to say things both serious and funny (compare a famous line at *Acharnians* 500: 'comedy too knows what is just', τὸ γὰρ δίκαιον οἶδε καὶ τρυγῳδία) and the reference to σκώψαντα, which I have argued above should bear the sense of 'making fun of people'.[39] The prayer of the chorus (of the poet?) would be: 'may I win the prize and wear the crown, by raising laughter, giving good advice,[40] having fun, and making fun of people'.

Finally at lines 354–371 we get the 'curse' against those unworthy to participate in these rites. But there is a twist here, in that the meter is anapaestic tetrameters, not unusual in itself, but this is the usual meter of the parabasis proper where in plays of the 420s the poet speaks through his chorus to the spectators. When we get to the parabasis at 674–737, we get only an epirrhematic syzygy of song + speech/song + speech—the anapaests, it seems, have been moved to the parodos.[41] There is more. The jokes at Archedemus *et al.* at 416ff. are prefaced by a direct address to the spectators, 'do you want us to make common sport of Archedemus?' (βούλεσθε δῆτα κοινῇ / σκώψωμεν Ἀρχέδημον;). And I have argued that lines 391–395 can be viewed as an address by the poet to the judges and his audience. This parodos, then, is more than a little in the manner of a parabasis. Those cursed at 354–371 include moral offenders (well and good), but also poor dramatic performers and unappreciative spectators, and dishonest public officials. At 366–367 we get an allusion to a politician, identified by the scholiast as either Archedemus or Agyrrhius, who had proposed a reduction of the *misthos* of the poets, presumably in a time of financial stringency—we know of a double *khorêgia* at this time. But Aristophanes maliciously makes the motive for this proposal revenge for being targeted in comedy,

> Or the politician who nibbles away at the poet's stipends,
> because he was made fun of in the ancestral rites of Dionysus.

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[39] This passage shows that the opposition of *spoudaia* and *geloia*, familiar from Plato and Aristotle, goes back to fifth-century drama itself.

[40] This is a constant feature of the self-portrait created by Aristophanes: the poet who gives the city good advice (as at *Acharnians* 626–664 and *Frogs* 686–687).

[41] See Sommerstein 1996b, 186–187.

ἢ τοὺς μισθοὺς τῶν ποιητῶν ῥήτωρ ὢν εἶτ' ἀποτρώγει,
κωμῳδηθεὶς ἐν ταῖς πατρίοις τελεταῖς ταῖς τοῦ Διονύσου.

We should notice his response, 'made fun of in the ancestral rites of Dionysus'. 'Bad' language, then, enjoys the twin sanction of tradition and religion.

If tragedy and comedy are in fact the twin sisters of Athenian drama, then comedy is the ugly sister. Concerned with raising laughs and appealing to the ridiculous (*geloion*), comedy presents ugly and base people, *kakoi* in the sense of that word as 'inferior', and uses ugly language and abusive terms (*aiskhrologia*) to achieve that end. But at the same time Aristophanes claims for himself and his comedy a role within the *polis* comparable to that afforded to Homer and to tragedy. He coins a new word for 'comedy', *trugôidia*, clearly modelled on *tragôidia*, and in one memorable line, quoted earlier, '*trugôidia* too knows what is just' (*Acharnians* 500) sets out the program for his comedy.[42] By saying 'bad things' about the *dêmos* and its leaders, about its poets and musicians, its thinkers and philosophers, comedy aims to fulfil the second criterion of poetic *aretê* laid down by 'Euripides' in *Frogs*, 'good advice, because we make the people in the cities better' (1009–1010).[43]

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[42] On this see Taplin 1983 and Olson 2002, 201.

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CHAPTER SIX

BADNESS AND INTENTIONALITY IN ARISTOPHANES' *FROGS*

Ralph M. Rosen

> 'In vain one explains that advocacy and representation are not the same thing.'
>
> (Wendy Steiner, *The Scandal of Pleasure*)

1. *Introduction: Representing badness*

Aristophanes' *Frogs* famously opens with Dionysus preparing to travel to the underworld in order to bring back the recently deceased Euripides, whom he regards as a 'clever' (δεξιός, 71) and 'creative' (γόνιμος, 96) poet. Although Dionysus' initial entrance on the stage as a fan of Euripidean poetry might lead the audience to expect that the rest of the play will address the nature of 'good' poetry, things soon take a turn in the opposite direction. It is remarkable, in fact, how much of the play, especially the *agôn* between Euripides and Aeschylus, is suffused with the discourse of 'badness', and how often attempts to articulate what constitutes 'good' poetry rely on a contrast with poetry conceptualized as 'bad'. Euripides and Aeschylus channel most of their energy in *Frogs* into ridiculing and repudiating each other's poetry, each one exalting the merits of his own by highlighting the badness of the other's.[1] The

[1] Dionysus prepares the audiences for this focus on poetic 'badness' by quoting at 72 from Euripides' lost *Oeneus* (fr. 565). Explaining his desire for a 'clever poet', he says that 'some are no longer with us, and those still alive are bad' (κακοί). Heracles takes issue with Dionysus' judgment of Euripides in the ensuing dialogue, incredulous that anyone would think Euripides a good poet. Heracles sums up Euripidean poetry at 106 as 'completely and totally bad' (ἀτεχνῶς γε παμπόνηρα). On the semantic range of πονηρός and πονηρία in Aristophanes, and the contexts in which 'bad' and 'badness',

two tragedians carry out their debate in terms that oscillate between absurd extremes of materialism (e.g., poetic badness can be weighed on an actual scale) and abstraction (e.g., the badness of a work's ideas), hoping that in the end their reciprocal accusations of badness will leave the audience with a clear sense of their differences and the aesthetic criteria for deciding which is the better poet. In the end, however, as Dionysus himself recognizes, clarity about literary value is not so easy to come by, especially when each type of poetry has been presented in such negative terms. The end of the *agôn* leaves a stronger, largely comic and parodic, impression of what is *bad* about each antagonist's poetry than of what is good, so no matter which of the two poets one ends up preferring, it is still a choice vividly circumscribed by its badness. Euripides may have to remain in Hades because his poetry was felt to be too edgy or avant-garde (*his* badness in Aeschylus' view), but Aeschylus will return to Athens with the various comic charges of badness against *him* still fresh in the audience's mind.

The question I would like to discuss in this chapter concerns the very nature of the badnesses imputed to each poet, and more specifically, the badness of Euripidean poetry in Aeschylus' eyes. At first glance, the extensive parodies of Aeschylean and Euripidean tragedy seem to dramatize a reasonably transparent aesthetic polarity—if the former is loud and bombastic, the latter is airy and thin, and so on—and each can histrionically accuse the other of writing tragedy in bad *style*.[2] Yet things are much less clear when we consider what each poet also has to say about good and bad *content* in tragedy. Aeschylus' overriding complaint against Euripides is that he writes plays that feature bad people doing bad things, often in morally ambiguous situations. In his critique of Euripides Aeschylus fixates on famous examples of scandalous women, such as the incestuous Sthenoboea or Phaedra, and, in a striking anticipation of Plato's discussion of artistic censorship in *Republic* 2–3, he takes Euripides to task for the dramatic representation of *ponêria* in his plays.

The contrast that Aeschylus is trying to draw with his own tragedy seems apparent enough, but scholars have often noted that Aeschylus

respectively, are appropriate translations of these terms, see Storey, in the preceding chapter (5) of this volume.

[2] The stylistic polarities of *Frogs* have been well treated in O'Sullivan 1992 (with further bibliography), who analyzes the *agôn* between Aeschylus and Euripides in terms of the familiar post-classical debate between a *genus grande* and *genus tenue*.

was himself also 'guilty' of representing *ponêroi* and *ponêria* in his plays.[3] Why exactly, for example, should we consider Euripides' Phaedra in *Hippolytus* a more scandalous figure than Aeschylus' own Clytaemnestra in his *Oresteia*? Phaedra may well have shown herself too weak to withstand an erotic attraction to her stepson, but, although Euripides may invest her with plenty of pathos, could any reasonable reading of the play consider her a walking endorsement of incest? She laments the shameful irrational forces within her, even as she cannot control them, and in the end is destroyed by them. Clytaemnestra, by contrast—deceptive, murderous, adulterous—remains unrepentant to the end, and can ultimately be cajoled only by cosmic forces into grudging détente.[4] There is, in short, badness in both Phaedra and Clytaemnestra, and one might even argue that Clytaemnestra is the 'badder' of the two, so why would Aeschylus in *Frogs* censure Euripides' Phaedra when he himself could just as easily be accused of representing similarly bad characters? Why, moreover, should Aeschylus complain when Euripides portrays 'kings dressed in rags' (*Frogs* 1063), when he himself brought on the stage the abject king Xerxes in tattered clothes at the end of *Persians*? For that matter, as Stanford noted in passing years ago,[5] 'bad people' of all stripes doing 'bad things' abound in Aristophanic comedy: why does Aristophanes, then, have his Aeschylus repudiate characters in tragedy who are the bread and butter of comedy?

These questions, I believe, show above all that one of the central issues of the *agôn* of *Frogs* is the representation of badness, specifically in tragedy, but more generally, even, in all artistic representation. This has always been, and continues to be, one of the most serious and intractable problems of aesthetic theory and practice, for representations of badness, whether of bad people or ideas, bring artist and audience into much more direct confrontation than other forms of mimesis.

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[3] See, e.g., *ad loc.* 1053–1054 in Stanford 1963, 165, and Sommerstein 1996, 250.

[4] See Dover's comment on *Frogs* 1044 (1993, 323), the line in which the Aristophanic Aeschylus claims that *he* never put a 'woman in love' in his plays. Dover rightly wonders whether Clytaemnestra might give the lie to this statement, but explains the apparent contradiction by claiming that 'in the *Oresteia* [she] is motivated primarily by desire for revenge, and enjoyment of Aigisthos is supplementary'. This strikes me as a tendentious, or at least limited, reading of the play, which is also suffused with erotic undertones. See, e.g., Moles 1979 and Pulleyn 1997.

[5] Stanford 1963, 165, at 1053–1054: 'In actual fact, Aeschylus himself displays a formidable amount of πονηρία in his plays, to say nothing of the πονηρία of a poet called Aristophanes'.

Authors (to limit ourselves here to literature) will know that such representations are potentially unsettling to an audience and will wonder how they will play; audiences, for their part, will have to decide why an author creates 'bad' characters to begin with and whether he or she is endorsing the badness they see before them. What is more, there is always the temptation for an audience to impute the badness of literary characters to authors themselves. Should they worry, then, that their own behavior will be corrupted by such literature? Such, in any case, are the charges that Aeschylus repeatedly levels against Euripides in *Frogs*: not only are his plays populated by reprehensible figures who corrupt the morals of the Athenian audience by encouraging forms of discourse that threaten the social stability of the city, but such poetry must reflect the similarly corrupted character of its author.

What is it about the badness of a Euripidean character, however, that makes it so monumentally different in Aeschylus' eyes from his own? In the next century, Plato would certainly have had no trouble repudiating *both* of them equally for representing badness—for him an immoral character was an immoral character, whether it was portrayed by Homer or a tragedian. Were Aeschylus' charges against Euripides' 'bad characters' in *Frogs*, then, simply hypocritical, or are we to imagine that Aeschylus here would really believe the badness of his bad characters to be somehow 'better' than the badness of Euripides' bad characters?

I would like to argue in what follows that the *agôn* of *Frogs* shows Aristophanes making his way towards a theory of what I refer to from here on as 'mimetic badness', and that this proto-theorizing anticipates in striking ways the problems we know as authorial intentionality and aesthetic *didaxis*.[6] For our purposes 'mimetic badness' will refer to dramatic representations of bad people and bad behavior, and by 'bad' here I mean 'as understood by the intended audience at the time of

[6] The problem of accessing the intentions of an author has in our own time been well internalized by literary theorists and critics. Foundational works remain Wimsatt and Beardsley 1946 [1954] and Barthes 1967 [1977]. Since Wimsatt and Beardsley, critics have been primarily concerned with the problem of whether a reader can in fact say anything meaningful about an author's intention in a given work, and if so, how a knowledge of an author's intentions might interact or compete with other interpretations of the work. Unlike twentieth-century theorists, Aristophanes would not be likely to question the possibility of inferring authorial intention from a literary work, but he does seem to be aware that assumptions about an author's intentions (including factors extrinsic to the work itself) can have an important effect on how one ends up judging it.

production'. I speak of Aristophanes 'making his way' towards a theory of intentionality and *didaxis* because he never actually articulated a theory in the play, nor is it likely that he had any interest in doing so. This is not say that Aristophanes would have necessarily had a technical vocabulary to phrase it as such, or that he would have conceptualized the problem exactly as we might.[7] But it does seem, as I would like to argue, that beneath the fast-paced comic repartée of the *agôn* lies an awareness that poetic meaning in general is highly contingent upon an audience's preconceptions of an author's intentions, and that such preconceptions about intentionality are even more pronounced in the case of mimetic badness, where the stakes are high for author and audience alike. As the *agôn* makes clear, audiences tend to construct their beliefs about an author based on a subtle calculus of style, content, and assumptions about what, or whether, a poet is trying to teach his audience. In the *agôn*, as it turns out, the only way Aeschylus can make a convincing case that his mimetic badness is 'good' and Euripides' 'bad' is by assuming that Euripides' *intentions* were bad from the start, that he intentionally wanted to teach bad things (i.e., 'bad *content*') and make people worse, and that this badness is amply demonstrated by the poetic *style* he adopts in his plays.

2. *Audience reception versus authorial intention*

It is Aeschylus who poses the crucial question of the entire *Frogs agôn* at 1008: 'What is is that we should admire in a poet?' (τίνος οὕνεκα χρὴ θαυμάζειν ἄνδρα ποητήν;). The attempts to answer the question, both before and after he poses it, are typically taken to highlight the many stylistic differences between the two antagonists. But we should not let this obscure a fundamental aesthetic point on which they both agree:

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[7] See previous note. It had to wait until the Hellenistic period for many of these as yet inchoate theoretical issues of the fifth century BCE to become systematized. The material that is only now gradually coming to light from the carbonized papyri of Philodemus from Herculaneum, for example, shows a lively, often polemical, interest in such fundamental matters as poetic form, moral content, didactic purpose, etc. Very little so far, however, seems to address specifically the question of an author's intentions as we might conceive of it, although often what we might call 'intentionality' is subsumed in Philodemus under questions of poetic 'meaning'. See, for example, Porter 1995, and especially 132, who notes the difficulty in distinguishing in Philodemus between an author's προνοούμενα (a '"pre-conception" of his subject-matter') and his διάνοια or νοούμενα ('ideas' or 'meanings').

when all is said and done, Aeschylus and Euripides both believe poetry should be didactic and morally edifying. Euripides' initial answer (1009) to Aeschylus' question is that a poet should be admired for 'cleverness and good advice' and because he will 'make people better in cities' (δεξιότητος καὶ νουθεσίας, ὅτι βελτίους τε ποιοῦμεν / τοὺς ἀνθρώπους ἐν ταῖς πόλεσιν).[8] This squares well with his earlier claim, at 951–954, that his poetry was 'democratic' (*δημοκρατικὸν* γὰρ αὔτ' ἔδρων) and that he taught the audience how to talk (… ἔπειτα τουτουσὶ λαλεῖν *ἐδίδαξα*). At 1019, Euripides asks Aeschylus what he thinks he 'taught' (ἐξεδίδαξας) the Athenians so well, and Aeschylus proceeds to make his well-known claims that he inspired military valor in them. At 1030–1036, he offers a list of great poets, Orpheus, Musaeus, Hesiod, and Homer, all of whom he calls ὠφέλιμοι because of their practical contributions to humanity. Both Euripides and Aeschylus, therefore, agree that νουθεσία and τὸ ὠφέλιμον are the primary goals of the poet, and neither would deny that poetry can, in fact, influence audience behavior. This may seem uncontroversial enough in itself, but it is easy to lose sight of amid their mutual recriminations, and will be a critical issue when we try to explain the differences in the mimetic badness of each poet. For if they each claim to write poetry that will instruct their audiences, what exactly are the criteria by which one form of *didaxis* is privileged over the other? Why, in particular, should Aeschylus charge the characters Euripides brings on the stage with badness as part of *his* didactic project when Aeschylus, as we mentioned earlier, deploys a full panoply of bad characters himself? And why does Aeschylus assume that the badness of Euripidean characters implies the badness of Euripides himself?

We may begin to address these questions by first observing a fundamental difference between each poet's accusations of the other: Euripides' repudiation of Aeschylean poetry never really leaves the aesthetic realm, while Aeschylus' repudiation of Euripidean poetry is both aesthetic and moral. Euripides never says that Aeschylus' didactic goals of inspiring martial valor in the audience is a bad thing, and he does not seem interested in portraying Aeschylus as immoral himself or a corrupting influence on the Athenians. For Euripides, Aeschylus' didacticism has simply failed because his poetry is stylistically so bad—boring, pompous, inscrutable, bombastic, repetitive, and so on. Euripides, in short, never accuses Aeschylus of badness *per se*, only of producing bad

[8] See Dover's excellent remarks (1993, 35–36) on the question of poetic didacticism in *Frogs*.

poetry, and he never complains that the *content* of Aeschylus' poetry is bad, or that Aeschylus himself was a bad person. By contrast, Aeschylus complains both about Euripidean poetry *and* Euripides the man; for Aeschylus, Euripides' bad poetry is both a symptom and an explanation of his bad character.[9]

Once again, we might ask: how can Aristophanes allow his Aeschylus to get away with this portrayal of Euripides as so thoroughly bad when Aeschylus' own poetry represented its own share of *ponêroi* and *ponêra*? Aristophanes shows his own self-consciousness of such questions especially in the scene at lines 905–1097, where the bantering Dionysus seems particularly interested in deflating the didactic claims of both poets, subjecting their seriously stated goals to the realistic perspective of an actual theater-goer. When Aeschylus, for example, explains at 932 his use of the term ἱππαλεκτρυών to refer to the insignia on a ship, Dionysus claims he always thought it referred to a politician named Eryxis (934). When Euripides, for his part, sanctimoniously claims at 971–979 that his poetry allowed audiences to think critically about everyday matters and so run their households better, Dionysus turns this into a joke (980–991)—whereas the audience used to be nothing but slack-jawed fools, Dionysus claims with obvious irony, thanks to Euripides they now interrogate each other on such matters as pots, fish, garlic, and olives. Such interjections are commonly explained as throwaway lines on the part of Dionysus, and to be sure their comic effect is undeniable.[10] But one of the reasons why an audience might find such repartée funny is because Dionysus' irreverent reaction to a poet's explicitly didactic agenda is one they themselves would know well from their own experience at the theater.

It may remain an open question even today whether or not artists actually do influence the behavior of audiences, but one would be hard pressed in any era to find an individual audience member who would actually admit to such vulnerability, who would choose to think of him- or herself as one of Dionysus' gullible, gaping fools. When Dionysus makes fun of Euripides' agenda of getting people to talk with each other about mundane affairs, therefore, his ridicule is not

[9] Cf., e.g., line 936, where Aeschylus addresses Euripides as an 'enemy of the gods' (θεοῖσιν ἐχθρέ); on other aspects of Aeschylus' personalized attacks on Euripides, see below, pp. 156–161.

[10] Dover 1993, *ad loc.* p. 315: 'Dionysos takes up the theme of τὰς οἰκίας οἰκεῖν ἄμεινον and trivializes it, in a way for which Euripides' last words are in effect a comic "feed" …'

so much directed at the agenda itself as at Euripides' presumption that he would really have any control over *how* an audience responds to it.[11] Dionysus' joke works precisely because no audience (certainly no Athenian audience) would *ever* see themselves as susceptible to as silly a conclusion about Euripidean tragedy as Dionysus draws—and so they are able to laugh with self-irony at the idea that they are powerless and malleable in the hands of a poet. In the end, in fact, the joke functions as *praise* for an audience's critical discernment, insofar as it relies on a knowing audience to laugh when Dionysus links Euripides' agenda to such things as pots and garlic, and calls into question the very idea that poets can ever actually be 'didactic', whatever their stated intentions.

For a poet to cling to a didactic agenda, as both Euripides and Aeschylus do in *Frogs*, seems to Dionysus, in fact, to border on hybris. Dionysus surely implies as much in his retort to one of Aeschylus' didactic claims at 1021. After Euripides had asked Aeschylus at 1019 what he had done to teach the Athenians to be so noble, Aeschylus responds that he had 'composed a play that was full of Ares' (δρᾶμα ποήσας Ἄρεως μέστον). The play he had in mind was *Seven Against Thebes*, as he then notes (1021), and the reason it was so effective is because it 'made every person in the audience *love* being warlike!' (ὃ θεασάμενος πᾶς ἄν τις ἀνὴρ ἠράσθη δάϊος εἶναι, 1022).[12] Dionysus' bantering response to this is easy to overlook, but is quite revealing (1023–1024):

> Well, that's a bad [κακόν] thing you've done; for you've made the Thebans
> braver in battle, and you should be beaten for this!
>
> τουτὶ μέν σοι κακὸν εἴργασται· Θηβαίους γὰρ πεπόηκας
> ἀνδρειοτέρους εἰς τὸν πόλεμον· καὶ τούτου γ' οὕνεκα τύπτου.

[11] Aristophanes seems also to have raised a concern in the parabasis of *Clouds* with the question of how much control a poet can maintain over his creation once he has 'gone public' with it. See Rosen 1997, 407–408.

[12] Although Wohl 2002 does not discuss this passage explicitly, the erotic metaphor here applied to military activity is very much of a piece with her study of the 'erotics of democracy' in Athens. See in particular her discussion (55–62) of Pericles' funeral oration at Th. 2.43.1. When Pericles makes his famous statement that the citizens should become *erastai* of the city (2.43.1.7), the immediate context is one in which he urges his audience to maintain their military valor and reminds them of the 'goods that inhere in warding off the enemy'. The Aristophanic Aeschylus would certainly like to claim a role in fostering such a mentality.

Commentators will point out that at the time of *Frogs* the Thebans were enemies of the Athenians,[13] so Dionysus' point is that for all Aeschylus' high and mighty rhetoric about whipping the Athenians into a military fervor, his didactic plan backfired because he was unable to anticipate the unintended consequence that some people watching his play might actually be inspired to work *against* the Athenians. It is a fleeting joke,[14] of course, but it offers nevertheless considerable insight into the problematic relationship between an author's stated claims for his work and an audience's reception of it. Here again Dionysus is not so much arguing with the substance of a poet's alleged goals as he is questioning whether poets can really control *didaxis* in the first place. Dionysus has, in fact, ironically identified a *kakon* in Aeschylus functionally equivalent to the very *kakon* that Aeschylus himself had charged Euripides with, namely inspiring some segment of the audience to behave badly. The irony makes it clear that Dionysus does not *really* hold Aeschylus (or any poet) responsible for such a *kakon*, and this in turn has the effect of calling into question Aeschylus' own criticisms of Euripides for corrupting Athenian audiences. Euripides, in other words, wanted to instruct the Athenians as admirably as Aeschylus; so why should anyone blame *him* if they failed to understand his motivations?[15]

The subsequent exchange between Aeschylus and Dionysus at 1025–1029 highlights further the discontinuity between authorial intention and audience reception. Aeschylus has no real response to Dionysus' retort at 1024 that he should be whipped for writing a play that encouraged the enemy Thebans. He says simply that the Athenians could have practiced all the virtues his *Seven* was trying to promote (and which, according to Dionysus, the Thebans had appropriated instead), but that they 'did not turn in that direction' (ἀλλ' οὐκ ἐπὶ τοῦτ' ἐτράπεσθε). He drops that topic, and proceeds to hammer home the point that his plays

[13] As, for example, Dover's note *ad loc.*, 1993, 319, and Sommerstein *ad loc.*, 1996 245.

[14] See Sommerstein's note (1996, 245, *ad loc.*): 'two seconds' thought will show that this complaint is nonsensical (it was the Athenians, not the Thebans, who had seen, and could have been inspired by, Aeschylus' play); it is a mischievous ("bomolochic") comment…' Historically, of course, Sommerstein is correct, but Dionysus' theoretical point is no less salient.

[15] When Dionysus 'blames' Aeschylus for making the enemy Thebans more warlike, he indicts him for conflating *effect* with *intention*. The objection Aeschylus might well have made to Dionysus is the same one that Euripides himself later makes in his own defense (see p. 154), namely that poets cannot possibly anticipate every possible audience and how each will react to their work.

inspire military virtue in his audience—this time (1026) he claims that his *Persians* taught the Athenians 'always to desire to defeat the enemy' (ἐπιθυμεῖν ἐξεδίδαξα / νικᾶν ἀεὶ τοὺς ἀντιπάλους). Dionysus will have none of these pieties, but instead remembers what *he* took away from the play when he was in the audience (*Frogs* 1028–1029):

> It gave me pleasure, in any case, when ⟨they heard the dead Darius⟩,[16]
> and the chorus straightaway clapped their hands like this and went *iauoi*!
>
> ἐχάρην γοῦν, ἡνίκ' †ἤκουσα περὶ Δαρείου† τεθνεῶτος,
> ὁ χορὸς δ' εὐθὺς τὼ χεῖρ' ὡδὶ συγκρούσας εἶπεν· ἰαυοῖ'.

While Aeschylus blusters about ethical *didaxis*, Dionysus articulates how audiences *actually* respond to tragic performances: they remember the sights and sounds of the performance that gave them pleasure (χάρις), not any lessons about citizenship or war which, at least considered in the abstract, would have doubtless been familiar enough from countless other public occasions given over to civic boosterism.[17] Did any Athenian really need to be *told* by a poet that military virtue is a good thing? Is that really what an audience was supposed to distill as the 'meaning' of *Seven* or *Persians*? Questions such as these lie not too far beneath the surface of Dionysus' jesting responses to Aeschylus, and anticipate the longstanding debate over whether art should (or even can) be evaluated according to an ethical or aesthetic calculus, or some combination of the two.[18] Dionysus' irreverence here is a sobering reminder to *both* poets, obsessed as they are in this section of the *agôn* with their own poetic *didaxis*, that the final arbiters of poetry will always be its consumers.[19] Whatever noble claims poets might make about their work,

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[16] The text here is corrupt. For details, see Dover *ad loc.* 1993, 320–321 and Sommerstein 1996, 246. I translate a conjecture of Sommerstein, ἐπήκουσαν τοῦ Δ., itself a variation of Dover's tentative ἐπήκουον τοῦ Δ.

[17] Such as, e.g., funeral orations (see above, n. 12) or the pre-performance activities of the great dramatic festivals, on which see Goldhill 1990 and Wilson 2000, 11–98.

[18] On this question in *Frogs*, see further Rosen 2004. Similar theoretical issues also interested Plato and many literary critics of the Hellenistic period; see Asmis 1995, Porter 1995, Rosen 2007a, 255–268. The rest of the *agôn* implies an interest in how 'content' and 'form' interact in literary evaluation, as it switches from ethical to formal criticism of each poet—the prologues, monodies, etc. For the most part Aeschylus remains fixated on the ethical badness of Euripidean tragedy (his formal criticism of Euripides functions largely to corroborate his ethical assessments), while Euripides is mostly concerned to show how Aeschylean tragedy, incoherent and boring as he claims it to be, fails as theater. See also Rosen 2004 for further discussion of the evaluative criteria that drive the *agôn*.

[19] As a counterpoint to the paternalistic attitude towards the audience that *both*

therefore, Dionysus has shown that badness, whether of content or form, can be found in all sorts of unexpected places if an audience is inclined to find it there.

3. *'Concealing badness'*

Dionysus' bantering deflation of Aeschylus' didactic claims in the scene we have just discussed may alert Aristophanes' audience to the problem of didacticism in literary criticism, but it hardly dissuades the character Aeschylus himself, who proceeds to contrast his didactic program with that of Euripides. This scene, 1039–1088, is the centerpiece of Aeschylus' repudiation of Euripides, and foundational for the subsequent history of scandalous arts and their relation to the societies that produce them. We shall return to this passage below, but for now we may cite what constitutes the real heart of Aeschylus' criticism, namely lines 1043–1044, where he objects that Euripides writes about 'whores' such as Phaedra and Stheneboea, and other women who play out their erotics on the stage:

> But by Zeus, I certainly didn't have any whoring Phaedras or
> Stheneboeas in my poetry;
> in fact, no one can say I *ever* wrote about *any* woman in love!
>
> ἀλλ' οὐ μὰ Δί' οὐ Φαίδρας ἐποίουν πόρνας οὐδὲ Σθενεβοίας
> οὐδ' οἶδ' οὐδεὶς ἥντιν' ἐρῶσαν πώποτ' ἐποίησα γυναῖκα.

Never mind that these are tragic figures who ultimately suffer for their weakness and transgressions, or that only a perverse reading of *Hippolytus* or *Stheneboea* could lead anyone to conclude that Euripides was endorsing the behavior of these ill-starred women and encouraging women of the audience to behave like them—the mere representation

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Aeschylus and Euripides display in the *agôn*, Aristophanes has the chorus (1109–1118) reassure them that the audience is discerning, educated, naturally strong, perceptive, and wise, i.e., hardly the unreflectively impressionable lot that both poets, to different degrees, assume them to be (even Euripides' stated goal of teaching the Athenians to become reflective [see above, p. 148] implies that they are ordinarily deficient in this regard). For further discussion of this passage, see below, pp. 164–166; also Dover 1993, 32–35. Dover is likely correct to say (34) that this passage 'does not…imply that all Athenians were perceptive critics of poetry, but only that some were, and that they exchanged opinions'. In any case, the chorus' remark allows the audience to *believe* that they are all 'perceptive' critics, and to feel smug about it, whatever the reality may have been.

of their badness is enough to rankle Aeschylus, who had already concluded that it *did*, in fact, have precisely such an effect. Aeschylus, by contrast, boasts at 1044 that none of his plays featured any 'woman in love' (οὐδ' οἶδ' οὐδεὶς ἥντιν' ἐρῶσαν πώποτ' ἐποίησα γυναῖκα, 1044).

It is rather astonishing how readily scholars have let Aeschylus get away with this claim, in view of his own Clytaemnestra, a character whose adultery with Aegisthus is unquestionably problematized in the *Agamemnon*, or even, in the same play, Agamemnon himself, who brought home from Troy a clearly eroticized Cassandra.[20] Aristophanes does not have his Euripides bring up such objections, but Euripides *is* mildly incredulous that anyone would object to some of the great tragic plots of their time (1049): 'and how do my Stheneboeas harm the city, you complete jerk?' (καὶ τί βλάπτουσ', ὦ σχέτλι' ἀνδρῶν, τὴν πόλιν ἁμαὶ Σθενέβοιαι;). When Aeschylus responds (1050–1051) that such plays 'persuade' the wives of respectable men to commit suicide out of shame[21] (ὅτι γενναίας καὶ γενναίων ἀνδρῶν ἀλόχους ἀνέπεισας / κώνεια πίνειν αἰσχυνθείσας διὰ τοὺς σοὺς Βελλεροφόντας), Euripides is again incredulous. He might have responded by questioning the likelihood that his portrayal of unhappy women driven to suicide would be seen by the audience as role models to emulate, but instead he makes an even simpler defense: weren't these plays, he asks, just based on inherited plots? (πότερον δ' οὐκ ὄντα λόγον τοῦτον περὶ τῆς Φαίδρας ξυνέθηκα;). He certainly cannot be held responsible for the basic outline of the stories or their characters. Euripides' unassailable claim elicits from Aeschylus perhaps his most categorical programmatic statement of the entire *agôn* (1053–1055):

AE. Well yes, the plots exist already, *but a poet, at least, must conceal what's bad,*
and not to bring it on stage or teach it. For boys
have a teacher who can explain things, young men have poets.
It's absolutely necessary, then, that we tell them good things.

[20] The sexual tensions of Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* have been well discussed by scholars for decades. See, e.g., Goldhill 1986, 152–154, Zeitlin 1996, 87–92, Foley 2002, 201–242; for the iconographical dimension, Bernal 1997.

[21] As Sommerstein notes (1996, 250 *ad loc.*), the participle αἰσχυνθείσας is somewhat ambiguous, although his understanding of it—that the women felt shamed into suicide because 'their whole sex has been so disgraced by Euripides' presentation of Stheneboea that life was no longer worth living…'—seems to miss the point of connecting their suicide with that of Euripides' distraught, lovesick characters. It seems preferable, in other words, to imagine that the women, inspired by Euripidean female characters to seek illicit love themselves, are ashamed at being discovered, and so must kill themselves. See Del Corno 1985, 220 *ad loc.*, and Dover 1993, 324 *ad loc.*

AI. μὰ Δί', ἀλλ' ὄντ' · *ἀλλ' ἀποκρύπτειν χρὴ τὸ πονηρὸν τόν γε ποητήν*,
καὶ μὴ παράγειν μηδὲ διδάσκειν. τοῖς μὲν γὰρ παιδαρίοισιν
ἐστὶ διδάσκαλος ὅστις φράζει, τοῖσιν δ' ἥβῶσι ποηταί.
πάνυ δὴ δεῖ χρηστὰ λέγειν ἥμας. …

Scholars have always had difficulty knowing quite what to do with this grand pronouncement. Sommerstein, for example, refers to the poet's duty 'to conceal what's bad' as 'a demand so sweeping in its generality that it would cripple tragedy (not to mention comedy), and one to which Aeschylus' own plays certainly do not conform, as Plato's treatment of him in *Republic* 2 and 3 demonstrates'.[22] Sommerstein is certainly correct here, but where does this leave us? Are we able simply to dismiss Aeschylus' formulation because we find it aesthetically barren and unsophisticated? We might indeed find it a 'crippling' principle if actually applied to tragedy, but the Aristophanic Aeschylus, at any rate, did not think so; *this* Aeschylus, at least, was able to distinguish what *he* composed (tragedy that concealed *ponêron*) from Euripidean tragedy (tragedy that staged *ponêron*), so it seems worthwhile to ask how exactly Aristophanes himself might have thought through this distinction, especially since it is his Aeschylus—for whom 'concealing *ponêron*' was the guiding aesthetic principle of the best poet—who is made to win the contest at the end of the play.[23] Aristophanes does seem to be interested in showing an Aeschylus fumbling towards what we might call a 'poetics of badness', i.e., a set of principles governing the poetic representation of bad characters and their interaction with an audience.[24] It may be true that Aeschylean tragedy is full of *ponêroi* and *ponêra*, and the Aristophanic Aeschylus too might well acknowledge this at some level

[22] Sommerstein 1996, 250 *ad loc.*; also 232–233, on l. 868.

[23] We cannot here address the familiar question of why Dionysus ends up choosing Aeschylus over Euripides at the end of *Frogs*, but see Rosen 2004 for an overview and discussion of the problem, with further bibliography.

[24] Aeschylus here anticipates Plato's discussion of mimetic badness in *R.* 2–3, and shares with him a paternalistic, supercilious attitude towards audiences. How ironic that Plato singles out Aeschylus by name for opprobrium twice because of his disrespectful representation of the gods (380a1 and 383a9; he also mentions Aeschylus earlier in the discussion of poetry at 361b2 and 362a3, but these are not explicitly censorious). Note that at 383c, Plato has Socrates conclude that not only will poets like Aeschylus be repudiated and refused a chorus, but (echoing language that Aeschylus uses in *Frogs*) they will be kept from the educational curriculum of the young (οὐδὲ τοὺς διδασκάλους ἐάσομεν ἐπὶ παιδείᾳ χρῆσθαι τῶν νέων). Sommerstein notes (1996, 233 on l. 868) that aside from Homer, Aeschylus is the only poet mentioned by name in this section of the *R.* on poetry and education.

(how could he deny that Aegisthus was *ponêros*, or Clytaemnestra *ponêra*, for example?); but he clearly finds a difference between whatever *ponêra* remain in his plays, and those in Euripides. What is it exactly, then, that allows him to differentiate his own mimetic badness so sharply from that of Euripides?

In the rest of the scene Aeschylus adduces further examples of Euripidean badness, and its effects on the audience, that he hopes will distinguish their two approaches. Euripides dressed royal characters in rags (1063) and so, says Aeschylus, inspired rich citizens to claim poverty so as to avoid trierarchic liturgies (1066–1067). He taught Athenians to 'cultivate chatter' (1069), which 'emptied the wrestling schools' (1070) and spread insubordination among sailors of the Athenian navy (1071–1072). Capping off his litany of Euripidean sins with the final flourish of the antipnigos, Aeschylus exclaims (1078–1088):

AE. What sort of bad things [κακῶν] is he *not* responsible for?
Did he not show women playing the madam,
and giving birth in sacred places,
and screwing their brothers,
and saying 'life is not life'?
And so because of these things our city
is full of assistant secretaries
and buffoonish monkey-politicians
who continually deceive the people.
And no one can carry the torch anymore
because no one now gets any exercise.

ΑΙ. ποίων δὲ κακῶν οὐκ αἴτιός ἐστ';
οὐ προαγωγοὺς κατέδειξ' οὗτος,
καὶ τικτούσας ἐν τοῖς ἱεροῖς,
καὶ μειγνυμένας τοῖσιν ἀδελφοῖς,
καὶ φασκούσας οὐ ζῆν τὸ ζῆν;
κᾆτ' ἐκ τούτων ἡ πόλις ἡμῶν
ὑπογραμματέων ἀνεμεστώθη
καὶ βωμολόχων δημοπιθήκων
ἐξαπατώντων τὸν δῆμον ἀεί,
λαμπάδα δ' οὐδεὶς οἷός τε φέρειν
ὑπ' ἀγυμνασίας ἔτι νυνί.

Aeschylus maintains here that Euripides corrupts audiences because his plays include illicit sexual encounters, compromised nobility, and murky philosophical phrases. It is noteworthy that his objections are not very specific: he does not cite shameful language or scandalous acting (no *aiskhrologia* or nudity, for example), but censures simply the

fact that Euripides dramatized characters driven to behave in morally or socially compromised ways. It would have been easy for Euripides, however, to turn each of these accusations against Aeschylus himself, if Aristophanes had been so inclined to have him do so: the many titles we have of lost plays suggest that Aeschylus could not possibly have avoided any of the mimetic badness that he repudiates in Euripides. We may recall, for example, such Aeschylean titles as *Laius*, *Oedipus*, *Lemnians*, *Hypsipyle*, *Bacchae*, *Pentheus*, and *Telephus*, which would have had to address either sexual themes, abject royalty, or some combination of the two.[25] Euripides may have made enigmatic philosophical statements here and there, as Aeschylus complains, but Aeschylus too was a master of quasi-philosophical γνῶμαι, often ambiguous if not incoherent, as Euripides points out earlier in *Frogs*.[26] Yet why does *Frogs* makes it so difficult for us to imagine Euripides accusing *Aeschylus* of emptying the wrestling schools or driving women to suicide? Why, in short, is Euripides made out here to be 'responsible for bad things' in society (κακῶν … αἴτιος, 1078), and not Aeschylus, whom any contemporary could have considered equally, if not equivalently, 'guilty' of mimetic badness?

The exchange between Aeschylus, Euripides, and Dionysus at 1044–1048, suggests how we might begin to answer these questions. We pick up from the passage quoted earlier (p. 153), where Aeschylus has claimed that his poetry never included women in love:

AE: In fact, no one can say I *ever* wrote about *any* woman in love!
EY: Well, by Zeus, there was certainly nothing of Aphrodite on *you*!
AE: And may there never be!
But she sure sat down really hard on you and your family, and in the end she really flattened you out.
DI: Well, by Zeus, ain't *that* the truth!
'cuz you got whalloped yourself by the very things you wrote about other people's wives

AI. οὐδ' οἶδ' οὐδεὶς ἥντιν' ἐρῶσαν πώποτ' ἐποίησα γυναῖκα.
EY. μὰ Δί', οὐδὲ γὰρ ἦν τῆς Ἀφροδίτης οὐδέν σοι.

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[25] Only a handful of fragments exist from all these plays, but their titles represented well known plot-lines, most of which were also taken up in one form or another by Sophocles and/or Euripides. See, e.g., Seaford 2001 [1996], 26–27 on similarities between Euripides' *Bacchae* and some of Aeschylus' fragmentary plays.

[26] E.g., 836–839, 922–926. On Aeschylus' defense (1059) of including 'big thoughts' (μεγάλαι γνῶμαι) in his plays, see below, pp. 161–162.

ΑΙ. μηδέ γ' ἐπείη·
ἀλλ' ἐπὶ σοί τοι καὶ τοῖς σοῖσιν πολλὴ πολλοῦ 'πικαθῆτο,
ὥστε γε καὐτόν σε κατ' οὖν ἔβαλεν.
ΔΙ. νὴ τὸν Δία τοῦτό γέ τοι δή.
ἃ γὰρ εἰς τὰς ἀλλοτρίας ἐπόεις, αὐτὸς τούτοισιν ἐπλήγης.

It is noteworthy here how the conversation suddenly becomes strictly personal. After Aeschylus boasts at 1044 that his plays contain no lovelorn women (disingenuously, as we have seen; above p. 153 f.), Euripides quips (1045) that there is no 'Aphrodite' in Aeschylus—he says 'you' (σοι), not 'your plays', *vel sim.*—as a way of explaining *why* his plays include no such women. Aeschylus takes this as a compliment, and then alludes to the gossip about Euripides' personal life in the next line (1047).[27] When Dionysus gleefully notes the irony of this situation (1048–1049), given Euripides' allegedly troubled home life, the banter has now become thoroughly *ad hominem*. The notion that there were connections between a poet and his work was common enough in antiquity, although it does seem significant that such connections arise most conspicuously in cases where there is something scandalous or transgressive about the work and/or where the subjective 'ego' of the poet is prominent or highlighted. This would explain, for example, why so often the details that we find in the work of the archaic iambographers Archilochus and Hipponax, or in the comedies of Aristophanes, end up attached to the biographies of the poets themselves.[28] Aristophanes himself had already formulated a version of the poetry-is-the-man concept a few years earlier, in his *Thesmophoriazusae* of 411, when Agathon claims at 167 that poets 'must compose things that are like their nature' ὅμοια … φύσει), but the examples offered by Euripides' kinsman in the ensuing lines link the general character of a poet's work to the poet's own character ('since Xenocles is a bad man, he composes badly' 169), not to specific details of a poet's putative biography. *That* kind of a link

[27] For the biographical tradition about Euripides' alleged friendship and collaboration with Cephisophon, who was alleged to have had an affair with Euripides' wife, see Sommerstein 1996, 238 *ad loc.* on l. 944.

[28] There were, of course, rich biographical traditions about all the canonical ancient poets, but those whose poetry could appear on the scandalous side gave particular encouragement to ancient biographers to find evidence for a poet's compromised life in his work. See, in general on the *vita*-tradition of the Greek poets, Lefkowitz 1981; also Rosen 2007b on the biographical tradition of the archaic iambographers in Hellenistic epigram; and Rosen 2007a, 243–268, on Archilochus' checkered reputation in classical Athens.

becomes more tempting to make when there is something outré about the work to explain, as in the case of our passage in *Frogs*, where Dionysus' remark about Euripides' unfortunate personal life segues into the discussion of his scandalous Stheneboeas and Phaedras.

This is why, in fact, when Aeschylus tells Euripides exactly why he objects to his portrayals of such women, he uses the second-person verb ἀνέπεισας (1050): '*you persuaded* the respectable wives of respectable men to drink hemlock…'. There is something about Euripides' poetry, in other words, that leads Aeschylus to assume a direct, and in this case thoroughly naïve, correlation between the content of the play and the author's intentions. If Euripides dramatizes scandalous behavior, the logic goes, he must be endorsing it, and what is more, the audience must be impressionable enough for it to influence their own behavior. If, however, as we have noted earlier, the historical Aeschylus himself also worked with plots that involved similarly scandalous mythological material, why is he not liable to the same charge? Why is he somehow immune, for example, from the charge that his Clytaemnestra in *Agamemnon* persuaded the respectable women of Athens to commit adultery and murder their husbands?

The answer to such questions implied in *Frogs*, I suggest, is that poetic *style* has a strong influence on assumptions about authorial intention and audience competence, and that the mechanisms of this influence become most apparent in moments of mimetic badness. To put this another way, the reason why Aeschylus can claim that Euripides' problematic female characters are dangerous to the audience and must reflect his own immoral views is because he adopted a style that, by his own description, encouraged a collaborative relationship between the poet, the audience, and his work. As we have just noted, the representation of *ponêra* in a work seems naturally to heighten an audience's interest in an author's intentions, and if there are no stylistic markers to distance the author from his work and from the audience, then it becomes all the easier for the audience to fabricate assumptions about its author's intentions as a function of the problematic content of his work.

To illustrate this point, let us turn first to Euripides' claims in the early part of the *agôn*, 907–970, where he criticizes Aeschylean poetry for all its many stylistic hallmarks—silent characters (911–920), bombastic and incomprehensible language (924–938). Euripides' main charge here is that Aeschylus deliberately obfuscated meaning by presenting the audience with something fixed and unapproachable: either his

poetry made no sense, or it was so grandiloquent that one had no choice but to accept it as a purely sensual, non-intellectual experience. It is remarkable that Aeschylus more or less puts it this way himself a little later on, where he defends his style at 1040–1044, the passage that leads up to Aeschylus' complaints about Euripides' female characters (above, p. 153). Here he describes his mimetic procedure as one in which his 'mind composed many examples of virtuous behavior' modeled on heroic men such as Lamachus, Patroclus, or Teucer (ὅθεν ἡμὴ φρὴν ἀπομαξαμένη πολλὰς ἀρετὰς ἐπόησεν, / Πατρόκλων, Τεύκρων θυμολεόντων, 1040–1041). His goal is to 'excite' (ἐπαίροιμι) the audience to measure itself by these standards of virtue when they hear a call to battle (ἵν' *ἐπαίροιμ' ἄνδρα πολίτην* / ἀντεκτείνειν αὑτὸν τούτοις, ὁπόταν σάλπιγγος ἀκούσῃ, 1041–1042). Aeschylus' metaphor in 1040, ἀπομάττω, implies a static exemplar from which one takes an impression or mold in order to copy it,[29] and suggests analogously that Lamachus and his ilk are viewed here as fixed character-types. Aeschylus has no interest in presenting his audience with anything to think about; he does not *persuade* them of anything (as he accuses Euripides of doing, 1050), but wants to rouse them to imitate the model he has set before them. The verb Aeschylus uses here, ἐπαίρω, again suggests that he is after an emotional, not intellectual or in any way dialogic, effect—people are supposed to react to his modeling without imagining there can be anything to say to the poet in response.

Aeschylus' style, too, must be appropriate to the goal, as he explains in a subsequent exchange with Euripides (1056–1060).[30]

EU: So if you keep speaking to us [things as huge as] Mt. Lycabettus
or mighty Parnassus, *that's* supposed to be 'teaching good things'—is it?—
when you should really express yourself in human terms?

AE: But, you wretch, it's necessary for
great thoughts and ideas also to produce words that are equal to them.
And in any case, it's appropriate for demigods to use more elevated diction than our own.

[29] Most of the occurrences of the word are later, but the meaning of the metaphor is evident in *Frogs*; cf. Callim. *Epigr.* 27, Philostratus, *VA* 6.19.

[30] See O'Sullivan 1992, 122, where this passage figures in an illuminating discussion of the 'grand style' as it is represented in Aristophanes.

ΕΥ. ἢν οὖν σὺ λέγῃς Λυκαβηττοὺς
καὶ Παρνασσῶν ἡμῖν μεγέθη, τοῦτ' ἐστὶ τὸ χρηστὰ διδάσκειν,
ὃν χρῆν φράζειν ἀνθρωπείως;
ΑΙ. ἀλλ', ὦ κακόδαιμον, ἀνάγκη
μεγάλων γνωμῶν καὶ διανοιῶν ἴσα καὶ τὰ ῥήματα τίκτειν.
κἄλλως εἰκὸς τοὺς ἡμιθέους τοῖς ῥήμασι μείζοσι χρῆσθαι·

Here Euripides reiterates and amplifies his earlier charge of Aeschylean pomposity, noting that Aeschylus' use of language as 'big as mountains' hardly makes for effective *didaxis* (1055–1056). But φράζειν ἀνθρωπείως is precisely what Aeschylus wants to avoid, since human language implies ambiguity and contingencies of meaning, exactly the aspects of Euripidean tragedy that trouble him the most. Aeschylus here sees his diction and style as tailored to conveying the fixity of gods and demigods, with their emblematic, larger-than-life characters (1058–1060).

We begin to see, then, why Aeschylus' mimetic badness might play differently than Euripides', and why, in particular, Aeschylus might be able to construct a firewall, so to speak, between himself and his characters such that he remains immune from charges of advocating or endorsing the 'bad things' his characters represent on stage. Insofar as Aeschylus' *genus grande* revels in language that, by design, does not come across as especially 'human', his plays appear almost hieratic, as if they had some other, more elevated, origin than human authorship and intentionality.[31] It is no surprise that Aeschylean style is repeatedly characterized in the play by material metaphors of weight, models, and stamps,[32] metaphors that imply a kind of substantive fixity and author-

[31] Contrast Hubbard 1991, 217: 'In the final analysis Euripides' drama is inferior to Aeschylus' because it has lost all sense of poetic presence, that is, the notion of the poet having a special personal relationship with his audience thanks to which he communicates with them through his works'. Although I am not entirely sure what Hubbard means here by 'poetic presence', however much of it Aeschylus might display seems, if anything, to *distance* him from his audience rather than bring him closer. One might well argue, in fact, that it was precisely Euripides' desire for a 'personal relationship' with his audience (cf., e.g., his self-avowed 'democratic' inclinations, above, p. 148) that Aeschylus objected to in the first place. Hubbard's own description of the stylistic contrasts between the two poets (1991, 212) also seems to suggest as much.

[32] Note the materiality inherent in the word γνῶμαι, which Aeschylus uses at 1059 ('great thoughts'). The word tends in *Frogs* to connote discrete, packaged 'units' of knowledge, conceptualized more as 'things' than as ongoing intellectual processes. See, e.g., 876–877, where the chorus introduces the *agôn* and refers to the λεπτολόγους ξυνετὰς φρένας … ἀνδρῶν γνωμοτύπων ('smart, intellectually refined minds of men who mint ideas'); cf. Stanford's translation (1963, *ad loc.*): 'coiners of maxims'.

ity. In the weighing scene at 1365–1406, in fact, this stylistic materiality is made literal—Aeschylean verse seems weightier because it actually *is* weightier. Euripidean verse, by contrast, is once again characterized by a dialogism and contingency that seems to defy materiality, keeping it in the realm of ideas and inviting speculation about the author's intentions.[33]

The Aristophanic Euripides, again in contrast to his Aeschylus, was famously proud of his stylistic 'lightness' and the human scale of his plays. In perhaps the best known passage of the entire play, 937–947, Euripides claims to have treated tragedy as a doctor would treat an edemic patient, reducing swelling and thinning her down to dimensions more in keeping with the proportions of a healthy human being. In the equally famous poetic manifesto that follows (948–979) he continues to emphasize his humanistic orientation: his plays are 'democratic' (952) in allowing men and women of all social classes to speak; he encourages his audience to talk (954) and think (971–979), and he makes the issues familiar and relevant to his contemporary audiences (959–967). Throughout this passage, Euripides several times encourages his audiences to think of his plays as a dialogue with *him*. At 959, for example, he claims that by dramatizing things familiar and intelligible to the audience (οἰκεῖα πράγματ' εἰσάγων, οἷς χρώμεθ', οἷς ξύνεσμεν), they would be able to criticize, or even refute, him because they would be able to tell if he were doing anything poetically out of line (ξυνειδότες γὰρ οὗτοι / ἤλεγχον ἄν μου τὴν τέχνην, 960–961). Euripides assumes an audience of considerable sophistication, unwilling to accept anything they see on the stage without subjecting it to critical scrutiny. *This* audience would be the last group to assume that whatever they see must represent the views and 'recommendations' of its author. Yet, ironically, the dialogic aspect of Euripidean style itself, which he would claim teaches his audiences to think carefully about the important issues of life, turns out, in Aeschylus' mind, to be the fundamental

[33] Note how in the penultimate test of the scales Euripides loses to Aeschylus because he puts a line of poetry with 'persuasion' (πειθώ) in it, while Aeschylus trumps this with a line that includes the word 'death' (θάνατος). As Dionysus explains, 1396, 'persuasion' is something light (κοῦφον) and 'doesn't have sense' (νοῦν οὐκ ἔχον), and he urges him to find something 'strong and big' (καρτερόν τι καὶ μέγα, 1398). Earlier (cf. 1050, 1071), Aeschylus had used a verbal form of πειθώ, ἀναπείθω, to explain how Euripides corrupted his audiences, once again assuming that there was something about Euripidean style that afforded an unmediated window into his intentions (see above, p. 159).

source of Euripidean badness. For Aeschylus, that is, it is Euripides' self-consciously personalized style—plain language, ambiguous, undogmatic presentation of moral conundra, and so forth—that allows an audience to draw 'bad' conclusions from the plays on their own, and then impute such 'badness' to the author himself.

4. *Aristophanes' 'Euripideanized' audience*

Two separate scenes in *Frogs*, when read together, suggest that Aristophanes had considerably more faith in the sophistication of his audiences than his Aeschylus does, and little actual worry that they would misinterpret representations of *ponêria* in tragedy (or comedy, for that matter), or assume that Euripidean tragedy would have them replicating the bad behavior of stage characters in their own lives. In the first, a scene between Xanthias and Pluto's slave in the underworld, 770–813, the two of them make a series of jokes at the expense of Athenian audiences, as they describe the origins of the *agôn* between the two poets.[34] At 771 Pluto's slave explains to Xanthias that as soon as Euripides arrived in the underworld, he immediately set to performing for an audience of criminals and reprobates (τοῖς λωποδύταις καὶ τοῖσι βαλλαντιοτόμοις / καὶ τοῖσι πατραλοίαισι καὶ τοιχωρύχοις, 771–772). They 'went crazy' for his 'rhetorical arguments, and his twistings and turnings', and judged him the 'wisest' (οἱ δ' ἀκροώμενοι / τῶν ἀντιλογιῶν καὶ λυγισμῶν καὶ στροφῶν / ὑπερεμάνησαν κἀνόμισαν σοφώτατον, 774–776). This, then, inspired him to claim the chair of tragedy from Aeschylus (777–778). Xanthias would have expected this claim, coming as it did from a band of criminals and their leader, to be immediately squelched ('and wasn't he pelted [for trying to steal Aeschylus' chair]?', he asks at 778), but the slave explains that the public (δῆμος) was actually in favor of a contest. Xanthias clarifies that this must have been a public consisting of reprobates (πανούργων, 781), and the slave then notes that this describes most of the people both in the underworld and in the Athenian audience currently watching the play (782–783):

Xan: Weren't there others who were allies of Aeschylus?
Slave: The good element is small, as it is here [*pointing to the audience*].

[34] I have discussed this passage also at Rosen 2006 in the context of Euripidean 'fandom'.

ΞΑ. μετ' Αἰσχύλου δ' οὐκ ἦσαν ἕτεροι σύμμαχοι;
ΟΙ. ὀλίγον τὸ χρηστόν ἐστιν, ὥσπερ ἐνθάδε.

Mockery of the audience is, of course, common in Aristophanes and nearly always functions ironically, its humor arising from the assumption that no one in the audience will think the abuse is really intended for him.[35] So when, later in this scene (808), Xanthias suggests that the reason Aeschylus refused to have the Athenians serve as the judge of the contest was because he considered them all a 'bunch of burglars' (τοὺς τοιχωρύχους), he is ironically linking these abusive jibes at the audience with the earlier characterization of Euripides' criminal throng of admirers in the underworld at 772–778. If the audience of *Frogs*, according to this comic logic, really are Euripidean sympathizers, they must be criminals; but of course, they cannot really think of themselves as criminals, or they would not find it amusing to be ridiculed as such by the poet. So the audience, understanding the irony of the poet's ridicule, can actually feel smug and superior in being marked as Euripideans.

A second, much-discussed, passage drives this point home, 1109–1118. Here, the chorus readies the players for the contest of prologues that begins at 1120:

If you're afraid that there may be some cluelessness
in the audience, such that
they wouldn't understand the clever things that you say,
don't be afraid of that, since it's not like that anymore.
These people are experienced soldiers,
and they each have a book and understand the clever parts.
What's more they're endowed with robust natures,
and have also been well honed.
So have no fear, but leave no stone unturned—
when it comes to the audience you can be sure they're wise.

εἰ δὲ τοῦτο καταφοβεῖσθον, μή τις ἀμαθία προσῇ
τοῖς θεωμένοισιν, ὡς τὰ
λεπτὰ μὴ γνῶναι λεγόντοιν,
μηδὲν ὀρρωδεῖτε τοῦθ'· ὡς οὐκέθ' οὕτω ταῦτ' ἔχει.
ἐστρατευμένοι γάρ εἰσιν,
βιβλίον τ' ἔχων ἕκαστος μανθάνει τὰ δεξιά·
αἱ φύσεις τ' ἄλλως κράτισται,

[35] See Sommerstein 1996, 179 on l. 276, for other Aristophanic passages that mock the audience.

νῦν δὲ καὶ παρηκόνηνται.
μηδὲν οὖν δείσητον, ἀλλὰ
πάντ' ἐπέξιτον, θεατῶν γ' οὕνεχ', ὡς ὄντων σοφῶν.

This passage has featured prominently over the years in discussions of Athenian literacy[36] mainly because line 1114 mentions spectators who have 'books'. Whatever Aristophanes was exactly envisioning by this line, the larger point he wants to make here is that the audience was sophisticated enough to approach the theater critically. Twice the chorus says (1108, 1116) that the contestants should 'not be afraid' that the audience will be too slow to pick up on the subtleties of the next phase of the contest. But what would they be afraid *of*, in the first place? Why do they even need to say this? Is it merely idle flattery of the audience, as some have thought?[37] In fact, it seems, this portrait of a sophisticated audience seems exactly in line with the ideal audience Euripides describes earlier in the play (see above p. 162)—self-conscious, reflective, and intellectually dynamic. The chorus wants to allay any fear, then, that the audience would be 'Aeschylean', passive, literal-minded and vulnerable to misunderstanding how poets and poetry operate. We have already seen from the earlier passage (770–813) that a Euripidean audience would be an audience of rogues and criminals; the Athenian audience itself was humorously accused in that same passage of being exactly that. Now, in this later passage, we see the Athenian audience described quite explicitly in terms of a Euripidean ideal. All these passages function together, I would suggest, to counteract the attacks that Aeschylus makes throughout the play against the Athenian as interpreters of tragedy, and to show that his fears about the vulnerability of contemporary audiences to mimetic badness are unfounded.[38]

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[36] For relevant bibliography, see Sommerstein 1996, 255–256 on ll. 1109–1118 and 1114.

[37] See Sommerstein 1996, 255 on 1109–1118, who (wrongly, I think), minimizes the significance of the passage by saying that the contest is completely transparent, and would hardly require any subtle intelligence to comprehend. It seems, rather, that the sophistication Aristophanes wants to impute to his audience is that they can see beyond the silliness of the *agôn*'s shenanigans, and apply a deeper critique to poetic assessment.

[38] Of course, if it is true that in *Frogs* Aristophanes conceptualized his audience, and audiences of Athenian drama more generally, as alert and interactive in the ways idealized by Euripides, the perennial question remains of why in the end Dionysus chooses Aeschylus over Euripides. We cannot address this question here, except to say that this argument supports those who would see the final choice as far more ambiguous and ironized than is often allowed. See Rosen 2004, and Halliwell forthcoming.

These passages suggest, then, that Aristophanes was highly aware of how complex relations between author and audience become when the work in question is controversial. Audiences never respond predictably or monolithically to any work of art, and representations of badness only heighten the potential for differences of opinion and allegations of scandal. When it came to the mimetic badness of Greek tragedy, *Frogs* offers us a glimpse of how diverse the responses of contemporary audiences must have been. We may infer from the *agôn* that *some* people must have been scandalized by Euripides' mimetic badness, just as others must have found Aeschylus pompous and unsophisticated. Presumably, too, there was a broad spectrum of opinion between these extremes, including people who, like Dionysus, found plenty to enjoy in both poets, plenty to ponder and discuss after the show, but who also found plenty to criticize. While Aeschylus and Euripides bicker over whose form of poetic *didaxis* is better, Aristophanes' own commentary on the issue seems to peek through here and there in such passages as we have examined in this section, where the very notion of poetic *didaxis* itself is problematized. While Aeschylus and Euripides imagine that they are trying to 'teach' their audiences something, and employ a style directed to that purpose, Aristophanes imagines yet another kind of audience, one that remains self-conscious of a poet's didactic intentions and so believes itself capable of an independent assessment of the work. This does, in the end, sound closer to what Euripides claimed his own *didaxis* was striving for, although Aristophanes' hypothetically knowing, sophisticated audience would doubtless reserve the right to interpret a work in ways that had nothing to do with the author's original intentions.

5. *Conclusion*

In the epigraph of this chapter, Wendy Steiner laments that the aesthetic problem of mimetic badness is still very much with us today, and at its core always resides the question of how an audience can ascertain what the artist intended by representing 'bad things'. It is a deceptively simply question, however, for although most of the time it makes little difference what we believe about an author's motives and meaning, when a work represents 'bad things', the stakes are suddenly raised. The contest of Aeschylus and Euripides in Aristophanes' *Frogs* shows clearly what a complex theoretical chain is set in motion as soon as

someone makes the claim that a work is representing something 'bad', 'badly', or both. As we have seen, even the question of determining mimetic badness in the first place is problematic: Aeschylus and Euripides both represent *ponêra*, but only the latter is singled out as dangerous to his audience; both poets claim that poetry should be didactic, but only in Euripides is this *didaxis* linked to the alleged *ponêria* of his plays. Somehow Aeschylus escapes all charges of advocacy when it comes to his mimetic badness, while Euripides is charged not only with representing badness, but also encouraging it. As Aristophanes shows, audiences may never really have access to the intending mind of a poet, but we can certainly see how a poet's style affects the ways in which they *attempt* to access it. A monologic, Aeschylean style that assumes—indeed demands—a passive audience ready to be swept away by the sensuality of language and spectacle will succeed in representing bad things far more dispassionately than a dialogic, Euripidean style, which assumes a more personalized relationship between audience and poet. While Aeschylus wants no response to his mimetic badness, Euripides wants to provoke; but in doing so, as *Frogs* makes clear, he renders himself all the more vulnerable to speculation about the 'real intentions' behind his decision to represent *ta ponêra*.[39]

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CHAPTER SEVEN

IMAGINING BAD CITIZENSHIP IN CLASSICAL ATHENS: ARISTOPHANES' *ECCLESIAZUSAE* 730–876

Matthew R. Christ

1. *Introduction*

When Athenians discussed citizenship and its obligations under the democracy, they regularly invoked not only positive values and models but also anti-values and negative models.[1] As Virginia Hunter aptly observes, 'The competing stereotypes of the good and the bad citizen are part of an ideology of citizenship'.[2] The roots of this way of talking about citizenship no doubt lie deep in Greek culture, where praise and blame are intimately linked and goodness and badness flip-sides of the same coin. In my view, however, there is a further and direct explanation for the fact that repudiation of bad citizenship went hand-in-hand with praise of good civic behavior in Athens: bad citizenship—in its diverse forms and at diverse levels—was a familiar phenomenon and a common alternative to good citizenship.[3] Notwithstanding the idealization of citizen behavior in the Attic funeral orations and the romanticization of this in some modern scholarship, Athenians varied widely in their commitment to the city and its ideals. Viewed in this light, the frequently invoked polarity of good and bad citizenship reflects not only the way the Athenian mind works but also the civic experience of Athenians.

In this chapter, I want to explore the place of 'badness' in Athenian discourse about citizenship by looking at three types of 'bad Athenians': sykophants (section 2), 'shirkers' (e.g. draft-dodgers) (section 3), and a

[1] Translations in the text are adapted from the Loeb Classical Library, Sommerstein 1983 and 1998, and Krentz 1995.

[2] Hunter 1994, 110.

[3] On bad citizenship in the legal sphere in Athens, see Christ 1998; on evasion of basic duties of citizenship, including military service and financial obligations, see Christ 2006.

particularly striking instance of a freerider from Aristophanes (section 4). In particular, I will probe some of the tensions behind the construction of a society based on a strict division between good and bad citizens. Aristophanes, I will suggest, is of particular interest in this regard: while he is certainly ready to exploit the absolute opposition of good and bad citizens in his comic enterprise and to join in the scapegoating of rascally 'others', he also sometimes problematizes this conception of society and its enemies and, in so doing, lays bare the tensions that it conceals.

2. *Badness in civic discourse: the sykophant*

One conspicuous area where Athenians invoke anti-values in civic discourse is in their discussion of the proper use of litigation under the democracy. In this context, 'sykophancy' appears as an inversion of proper legal behavior and the 'sykophant' as the litigious alter ego to the model, law-abiding Athenian. As I argue in *The Litigious Athenian*, Athenians cast the sykophant as a depraved outsider whose legal behavior is antithetical to that of the good citizen.[4] The alterity of this noxious creature is made abundantly clear through both word and action on the comic stage. For example, in Aristophanes' *Acharnians* (425 BCE), Dicaeopolis traces the roots of the Peloponnesian war to sykophantic informers against Megarian goods (515–519):

> For men among us (I am not talking about the city as a whole;
> remember this, that I am not speaking of the city)
> in any case, rascally fellows, ill-struck,
> worthless, ill-coined, spurious fellows
> kept crying out as sykophants against Megarian cloaks.
>
> Ἡμῶν γὰρ ἄνδρες,—οὐχὶ τὴν πόλιν λέγω·
> μέμνησθε τοῦθ', ὅτι οὐχὶ τὴν πόλιν λέγω,—
> ἀλλ' ἀνδράρια μοχθηρά, παρακεκομμένα,
> ἄτιμα καὶ παράσημα καὶ παράξενα,
> ἐσυκοφάντει Μεγαρέων τὰ χλανίσκια.

Dicaeopolis, in emphatically distinguishing sykophants from the city at large makes it clear that these individuals are outsiders in every sense—

[4] Christ 1998, esp. 48–71. On the Athenian portrayal of the sykophant, see also the exchange between Osborne (1990) and Harvey (1990); Rubinstein 2000, 198–212 (but cf. Christ 2002); and Fisher in this volume.

counterfeit citizens, as he puts it—and not representative of the Athenian people and their shared values. Later in *Acharnians*, Aristophanes dramatizes the marginality of sykophants by having Dicaeopolis abuse and then physically expel the two sykophantic informers who intrude on his private market (818–829, 908–958). In *Birds* (414 BCE) and *Wealth* (388 BCE), a similar pattern is enacted, highlighting the status of the sykophant as a social pariah: in each comedy a sykophant intrudes, is exposed as base and perverse, and is then expelled (*Av.* 1410–1469, *Pl.* 850–958). Aristophanes' rival Eupolis joins in the fun of sykophant-bashing in his *Demes* (412 BCE): he brings onstage a base sykophant and pairs him up with his polar opposite, Aristides the Just, who has him bound and expelled for the legal shenanigans of which he boasts (fr. 99.79–120 KA).[5]

Similarly, Athenian litigants regularly exploit the idea of sykophancy as a social evil that is antithetical to the values Athenians cherish. They frequently cast themselves as legal innocents who respect the city's laws and legal procedures, and their opponents as sykophantic outsiders—polluted enemies of society—who threaten to turn the city upside down with their abuse of litigation. Litigants invite jurors, as representatives of society at large and themselves potential targets of sykophancy, to unite in expelling sykophants like their opponents from the body politic.[6]

The most colorful and vicious attack on a legal opponent in these terms is that found in the two Demosthenic speeches *Against Aristogeiton* (Demosthenes 25 and 26), which were delivered in 324 BCE. In his prosecution of the *rhêtôr* Aristogeiton, Demosthenes portrays his opponent as a consummate sykophant who makes a mockery of the laws and legal process in the city: Aristogeiton engages in legal blackmail (25.49–52), levels false charges (25.28; cf. 25.32), and even sues those who paid for his father's funeral (25.54–55). In case his audience misses the social implications of Aristogeiton's despicable behavior, Demosthenes explicitly characterizes him as a polluted outsider, declaring him (25.82) 'the thrice-accursed, the common foe, the universal enemy' (ὁ τρισκατάρατος, ὁ κοινὸς ἐχθρός, ὁ πᾶσι δυσμενής). What should be done with such an anti-citizen? Demosthenes advises (25.95):

> Just as physicians, when they detect a cancer or an ulcer or some other incurable evil, cauterize it or cut it away, so you must all unite in

[5] On the sykophant in comedy, see further Christ 1998, 53–56, 59–62, 104–116, 145–147.

[6] On sykophancy in forensic oratory, see further Christ 1998, 56–59, 62–63, 90–104.

> sending this monster beyond the frontier, in casting him out of the city, in destroying him …
>
> δεῖ δὴ πάντας, ὥσπερ οἱ ἰατροί, ὅταν καρκίνον ἢ φαγέδαιναν ἢ τῶν ἀνιάτων τι κακῶν ἴδωσιν, ἀπέκαυσαν ἢ ὅλως ἀπέκοψαν, οὕτω τοῦτο τὸ θηρίον ὑμᾶς ἐξορίσαι, ῥῖψαι ἐκ τῆς πόλεως, ἀνελεῖν …

Reinforcing this urgent plea to expel the beast among them (cf. 25.8) is Demosthenes' vivid narrative of how, when Aristogeiton was jailed as a state-debtor, even his fellow prisoners had the good sense to separate themselves from him. Aristogeiton stole a document (*grammateion*) from another inmate and refused to return it; a fight ensued in which (25.60–62)

> Aristogeiton bit off the other man's nose. At this point, the victim in his distress abandoned the search and quest for his *grammateion*. The other prisoners, however, later found it in a chest of which the defendant possessed the key. After that, the inmates of the jail voted not to share fire or light, drink or food with him, not to receive anything from him, not to give him anything. To prove the truth of my statements, please call the man whose nose this monster bit off and swallowed.
>
> ἀπεσθίει τὴν ῥῖνα τἀνθρώπου. καὶ τότε μὲν περὶ τὴν γεγονυῖαν συμφορὰν ἄνθρωπος γενόμενος ἀπέστη τοῦ τὸ γραμματεῖον ἐρευνᾶν [καὶ ζητεῖν]· ὕστερον δ' εὑρίσκουσι τὸ γραμματεῖον ἐν κιβωτίῳ τινί, οὗ τὴν κλεῖν οὗτος εἶχεν. καὶ μετὰ ταῦτα ψηφίζονται περὶ αὐτοῦ ταῦθ' οἱ ἐν τῷ οἰκήματι, μὴ πυρός, μὴ λύχνου, μὴ ποτοῦ, μὴ βρωτοῦ μηδενὸς μηδένα τούτῳ κοινωνεῖν[, μηδὲ λαμβάνειν, μηδ' αὐτὸν τούτῳ διδόναι]. καὶ ὅτι ταῦτ' ἀληθῆ λέγω, κάλει μοι τὸν ἄνθρωπον οὗ τὴν ῥῖν' ὁ μιαρὸς οὗτος ἐσθίων κατέφαγεν.

At the conclusion of this remarkable story, Demosthenes poses a rhetorical question (25.63): 'Is [Aristogeiton] not impious, savage, and unclean? Is he not a sykophant?' (οὐκ ἀσεβής; οὐκ ὠμός; οὐκ ἀκάθαρτος; οὐ συκοφάντης;). Unlike Aristophanes, who can physically drive his sykophants off the comic stage, Demosthenes cannot literally drive his opponent off the legal stage before his audience. His vivid jailhouse narrative, however, models for the jurors what they should do through their verdict, namely, remove this cannibalistic sykophant from their midst.[7]

The fact that comic writers and litigants alike portray the sykophant as a social enemy and outcast suggests that Athenian audiences found appealing this model of civic society, in which the majority must act

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[7] For some additional observations concerning this episode, see Christ 1998, 56–59; cf. Rosenbloom 2003.

in unity against the negative forces threatening it.[8] Indeed, chilling testimony to the appeal of this notion is found in its exploitation by the Thirty in their purge of their democratic enemies in 404/3 BCE. As Xenophon describes it (*HG* 2.3.12):

> At first, then, [the Thirty] arrested and tried on capital charges the men who everyone knew had made a living from sykophancy under the democracy and had been a burden on the good men. The Council gladly condemned them, and the others, at least all who were conscious that they were not such men themselves, were not at all displeased.
>
> ἔπειτα πρῶτον μὲν οὓς πάντες ᾔδεσαν ἐν τῇ δημοκρατίᾳ ἀπὸ συκοφαντίας ζῶντας καὶ τοῖς καλοῖς κἀγαθοῖς βαρεῖς ὄντας, συλλαμβάνοντες ὑπῆγον θανάτου· καὶ ἥ τε βουλὴ ἡδέως αὐτῶν κατεψηφίζετο οἵ τε ἄλλοι ὅσοι συνῄδεσαν ἑαυτοῖς μὴ ὄντες τοιοῦτοι οὐδὲν ἤχθοντο.

Ultimately, however, the Thirty put to death some 1,500 citizens apparently on the pretext that they were cleansing the city of sykophants.[9]

The appeal of the idea of sykophancy to Athenians, as I see it, was that it provided a simplified model of society, in which good and bad were readily discernible and Athenians collectively allied against aberrant individuals who embraced values antithetical to those of the group. This was, however, a fragile social construct. One problem with this vision of Athenian society is that good and bad were not so easily distinguished in the legal sphere: this was true not only because it was difficult for the public to evaluate claims concerning legal behavior that often took place outside public view, but also because the line between proper and improper legal behavior could be fuzzy. Indeed, sykophancy was largely in the eye of the beholder, and the label sykophant clearly a flexible one: as Xenophon ironically observes in his account of the Thirty's purge of 'sykophants', men were happy to see sykophants removed from society as long as they were not counted among them. The subjective nature of this label is also abundantly clear in the courts, where litigants, who themselves behaved shrewdly and cynically, worked to pin the title sykophant on their opponents so as to isolate them from the group and turn jurors against them.[10]

Another limitation of this model is that it overlooks how embedded litigation was in Athenian society and the ways in which Athenian legal

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[8] Cf. the Athenian scapegoating of alleged conspirators: see Roisman 2006, 5, 158.

[9] Cf. [Arist.] *Ath.* 35.3; Lys. 12.5. On the role of charges of sykophancy in this episode, see Christ 1992, 343–346, and 1998, 72, 80–81.

[10] On the social dynamics involved in seeking to impose the label sykophant on an individual, see Christ 1998, 59–63. On the cynical behavior of litigants, see *ibid.*, 36–39.

institutions may have encouraged, or at least permitted, abuse. Interestingly, although Aristophanes lambastes sykophants throughout his comic career, he shows some consciousness of the social complexity of legal excess and abuse. In *Wasps* (422 BCE), for example, he explores the symbiosis between jurors and sykophantic prosecutors like Cleon who keep the courts busy and thus ensure jurors a continuing source of pay.[11] Furthermore, in his sykophant scene in *Wealth*, Aristophanes allows the sykophant to defend himself on the grounds that the city relies upon volunteers like himself to step forward to prosecute on behalf of the public (901–925). His basic observation is accurate—the city did depend on volunteer prosecutors—and his interlocutor has no good refutation of this. While this sykophant, like other Aristophanic sykophants, is driven off the stage, Aristophanes suggests that the problem of legal abuse is not simply a matter of a few bad apples but of institutional structures that rely upon private initiative to remedy public harms.[12]

3. *Badness in civic discourse: the shirker of civic duties*

The discussion of sykophancy illustrates well the attraction of Athenians to anti-values and negative foils in articulating ideals concerning citizen behavior. It was, however, not only in the legal sphere that Athenians were drawn to this sort of conceptualizing, but also in connection with citizens' performance of their basic civic duties, including service as hoplite and, for the wealthy, performance of liturgies and payment of the war tax (*eisphora*). While Athenians had no single, vivid term analogous to 'sykophant' for those who dodged military service or for those who evaded their financial obligations, they envisioned these bad citizens in terms similar to the anti-social sykophant: as anti-citizens who perversely and exceptionally reject the shared values of the majority.[13]

Let us consider briefly the characterization of draft-dodgers in these terms. One of the prosecutors of the younger Alcibiades for draft evasion, for example, asserts that 'he alone of the citizens is subject to every

[11] See, e.g., Ar. *V.* 197, 505; cf. *Eq.* 255–257, 1359–1361; Christ 1998, 106–109.

[12] On this scene, see Christ 1998, 145–147.

[13] On draft evasion, see Christ 2004, and 2006, 45–87 (an expanded version of my 2004 article). On the evasion of financial obligations, see Gabrielsen 1986, 1987; Christ 1990; Cohen 1992, 191–207; Christ 2006, 143–204.

provision of the law' (ὅλῳ τῷ νόμῳ μόνον αὐτὸν τῶν πολιτῶν ἔνοχον εἶναι) concerning military offenses (Lys. 14.7), and pointedly contrasts this with other hoplites, who fulfilled their duty notwithstanding hardship and illness (14.14–15); if the jury does not make an example of this villain, others may emulate him (14.12, 15).[14] The isolation of the named target from the group here is typical, as is the invitation to the audience to unite self-righteously in condemning the deviant as an example to any others who may be similarly inclined.[15] Politicians seem especially to have been magnets for such scapegoating: their enemies routinely seek to isolate them from the group by asserting that they alone failed to serve when called upon or that they served but disgracefully fled the enemy on the battlefield.[16]

In other contexts, however, speakers are more vague concerning the individuals who fall short of civic ideals, alluding to them without naming them. Thus, for example, Lysias' client Mantitheus asserts (16.13; cf. 20.23):

> When you made your alliance with the Boeotians and we had to go to the relief of Haliartus [395 BCE], I had been enrolled by Orthobulus in the cavalry. I saw that everyone thought that, whereas the cavalry were assured of safety, the infantry would have to face danger; so, while *others* mounted on horseback illegally without having passed the mandatory review (*dokimasia*), I went up to Orthobulus and told him to strike me off the cavalry list, as I thought it shameful, while the majority were to face danger, to take the field having provided for my own security.
>
> ὅτε τὴν συμμαχίαν ἐποιήσασθε πρὸς Βοιωτοὺς καὶ εἰς Ἁλίαρτον ἔδει βοηθεῖν, ὑπὸ Ὀρθοβούλου κατειλεγμένος ἱππεύειν ἐπειδὴ πάντας ἑώρων τοῖς μὲν ἱππεύουσιν ἀσφάλειαν εἶναι δεῖν νομίζοντας, τοῖς δ' ὁπλίταις κίνδυνον ἡγουμένους, ἑτέρων ἀναβάντων ἐπὶ τοὺς ἵππους ἀδοκιμάστων παρὰ τὸν νόμον ἐγὼ προσελθὼν ἔφην τῷ Ὀρθοβούλῳ ἐξαλεῖψαί με ἐκ τοῦ καταλό-

[14] That the prosecution is for draft evasion (*astrateia*) rather than desertion of the ranks (*lipotaxion*) is convincingly argued by Hamel 1998, 362–376; cf. Hansen 2003. Cases involving military offenses came before juries composed of individuals who had served as hoplites on the campaign in question (Lys. 14.5, 15, 17; cf. D. 39.17) and the generals presided over these trials (Lys. 15.1–2); cf. Christ 2006, 59–60.

[15] On the 'consequentialist topos' invoked by the prosecutor here, see Lanni 2004, 166–168. On litigants' manipulation of Athenian anxieties over the preservation of social order, see Roisman 2005, 192–199, and 2006, 151–160.

[16] Politicians as draft-dodgers: see, e.g., D. 19.113 (Aeschines); Ar. *Eq.* 442–444 (Cleon); Ar. *Eq.* 1369–1372 (Cleonymus); Aeschin. 3.148 (Demosthenes); X. *Smp.* 2.14 (Peisander); with further evidence in Christ 2006, 58 n. 37. Politicians as deserters of the ranks: see, e.g., Ar. *Nu.* 353–354, 672–680 (Cleonymus); Aeschin. 3.152, Din. 1.12 (Demosthenes); Ar. *Av.* 1556–1558, X. *Smp.* 2.14 (Peisander); with further evidence and discussion in Christ 2006, 128–141.

> γου, ἡγούμενος αἰσχρὸν εἶναι τοῦ πλήθους μέλλοντος κινδυνεύειν ἄδειαν ἐμαυτῷ παρασκευάσαντα στρατεύεσθαι.

Later, Mantitheus continues in a similar vein with his self-praise (16.15):

> Then after that, gentlemen, there was the expedition to Corinth; and everyone knew in advance that it would be dangerous. While *others* were trying to shirk their duty, I contrived to have myself posted in the front rank for our battle with the enemy …
>
> Μετὰ ταῦτα τοίνυν, ὦ βουλή, εἰς Κόρινθον ἐξόδου γενομένης καὶ πάντων προειδότων ὅτι δεήσει κινδυνεύειν, ἑτέρων ἀναδυομένων ἐγὼ διεπραξάμην ὥστε τῆς πρώτης τεταγμένος μάχεσθαι τοῖς πολεμίοις·

In both passages, Mantitheus exploits his audience's suspicion that a subgroup of Athenians, unnamed, are shirking their military responsibilities.

Aristophanes' chorus of waspish jurors in *Wasps* invoke this same specter, asserting (1114–1121; cf. *Ra.* 1014–1017):

> There are drones sitting among us;
> they have no stinger, and they stay at home
> and eat up our crop of tribute without toiling for it;
> and that is very galling for us, if some draft-dodger
> gulps down our pay, when he's never had
> an oar or a spear or a blister in his hand on behalf of this country.
> No, I think that in future any citizen whatever
> who doesn't have his stinger should not be paid three obols.
>
> ἀλλὰ γὰρ κηφῆνες ἡμῖν εἰσιν ἐγκαθήμενοι
> οὐκ ἔχοντες κέντρον, οἳ μένοντες ἡμῶν τοῦ φόρου
> τὸν γόνον κατεσθίουσιν οὐ ταλαιπωρούμενοι.
> τοῦτο δ' ἔστ' ἄλγιστον ἡμῖν, ἥν τις ἀστράτευτος ὢν
> ἐκροφῇ τὸν μισθὸν ἡμῶν, τῆσδε τῆς χώρας ὕπερ
> μήτε κώπην μήτε λόγχην μήτε φλύκταιναν λαβών.
> ἀλλά μοι δοκεῖ τὸ λοιπὸν τῶν πολιτῶν ἔμβραχυ
> ὅστις ἂν μὴ 'χῃ τὸ κέντρον μὴ φέρειν τριώβολον.

The idea advanced here that men must 'give' to the city, by performing their duties, to 'get' civic benefits in return—jury-pay in this case—is consistent with the commonly invoked view of Athenian citizens as shareholders in the city, who each do their part and get a share of the benefits resulting from this (see section 4). Those who fail to 'give', like the draft-evaders in this passage, should be deprived of civic privileges and be excluded from the elite citizen group.

The stark division of the city into draft-evaders and proper hoplites, however, is misleading, an oversimplification of a complex social reality.

In fact, draft evasion was a real option for all Athenians, not simply for a discrete minority, and it was difficult for the city to monitor or control this.[17] To be sure, Athenian speakers invoke the civic ideal that Athenians should be ready to sacrifice their 'bodies and property' for the city.[18] Athenians, however, varied widely in their willingness to hand their bodies and property over to the city in fulfillment of their civic duties. Considerations of self-interest and survival naturally cropped up, and led some to evade their duties or fall short in performing them.[19]

Athenians were acutely conscious of the tug of self-interest on individuals, and their civic ideology reflects this: it seeks to assure individuals that it was in fact in their interest to support the city by performing civic duties, since the city gives back so much in return for this.[20] This ideal reciprocity between citizen and city is encapsulated in the commonly expressed idea that a service performed for the city is a voluntary 'loan' or 'contribution' (*eranos*) that will be paid back. Thus, in his funeral oration, Thucydides' Pericles characterizes the sacrifice of the city's hoplites as a 'most noble contribution' (κάλλιστον … ἔρανον) in return for which they obtain ageless fame (2.43.1–2; cf. Lycurg. 1.143). In this case, good citizenship is not only an honorable course for the individual but also an advantageous one with personal benefits. Not all citizens, however, found this calculus appealing. A fascinating scene in Aristophanes' *Ecclesiazusae* (ca. 392 BCE) probes the limits of reciprocity and citizenship, in its portrayal of an utterly selfish citizen who refuses to share his property under the comedy's new order in which citizens hold all property in common.[21] In so doing, this scene provides an interesting perspective on 'badness' and citizenship, not only onstage but offstage.

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[17] The evidence is gathered in Christ 2006, 46–64.

[18] See, e.g., D. 10.28; 42.25; Th. 2.43.2; cf. [Arist.] *Ath.* 29.5, with Rhodes 1981, 382–383.

[19] On the role of self-interest in the evasion of military service, see Christ 2006, 48–51; on its role in evasion of financial obligations, see *ibid.*, 171–184.

[20] On this strand of the Athenian ideology of citizenship, see Christ 2006, 24–32.

[21] Although this scene's focus on the sharing of property with the city under the comedy's new regime most directly calls to mind the financial obligations of Athenians to their city, I take it ultimately as a reflection on contributions of all sorts—both financial and personal—that citizens make to the city and the limits of civic control over these citizen resources.

4. *Aristophanes'* Ecclesiazusae *730–876*

Aristophanes' *Ecclesiazusae* presents an intriguing exchange between two unnamed citizens concerning whether to deliver property to the common pool as required under the new civic regime established by the city's women (730–876).[22] 'First Citizen', honest but naive, is on his way to deliver his property to the city in compliance with the women's decree; his only concern is that, if he lingers, there may be no place left for his contribution (794–795). 'Second Citizen', unscrupulous and cynical, holds back on contributing his share. He shrewdly waits to see if the fickle Assembly will rescind this directive (797–798; 812–822), and if others will actually comply. He asks his interlocutor (777–778):

> Do you really believe that any single one of them who has any sense
> will bring his goods in? It's not our ancestral way.
>
> οἴσειν δοκεῖς τιν' ὅστις αὐτῶν νοῦν ἔχει;
> οὐ γὰρ πάτριον τοῦτ' ἐστίν.

While the cynical citizen refuses to contribute his share, he is more than ready to enjoy the common feasting (855).[23] The scene closes with the cynical Athenian reflecting (872–874):

> I certainly need some scheme, by Zeus,
> to let me keep the property I've got, and also somehow
> share with these people in the communal meal that's being prepared.
>
> νὴ τὸν Δία, δεῖ γοῦν μηχανήματός τινος,
> ὅπως τὰ μὲν ὄντα χρήμαθ' ἕξω, τοῖσδέ τε
> τῶν ματτομένων κοινῇ μεθέξω πως ἐγώ.

Let us consider the significance of this scene, first, within the comedy, and, second, against the backdrop of its democratic Athenian context.

What are we to make of the cynical Athenian and his role within the comedy? Some scholars regard this character as but a momentary obstacle to the new order, with which most citizens within the comedy cooperate.[24] Sommerstein suggests, in fact, that, though the cynical Athenian gets the last word in this scene and sets off to circumvent the new order's regulations, it would have been obvious to an ancient

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[22] I expand here on my discussion of this scene in Christ 2006, 32–34. On the problem of the identities of the two unnamed citizens, see Olson 1991, who argues that the Neighbor is the First Citizen and the Second Citizen is an anonymous character.

[23] Cf. the *kolax*/parasite, who seeks to dine at the expense of others without making his own contribution: see Fisher in this volume.

[24] See, e.g., Rothwell 1990, 7.

audience that he would fail: 'Possibly … [his] failure was predicted in a following choral song; possibly, as in several other Aristophanic scenes where a character leaves threatening action hostile to the comic project, [failure] was simply assumed'.[25] In my view, however, this does not do justice to the ambiguities present here. We should not be too ready to assume that the cynical Athenian will fail in his efforts to circumvent the regulations of the new order. More fundamentally, however, we should not assume that his opposition to 'the comic project' is categorically and unambiguously 'bad' and entirely worthy of failure in the eyes of an Athenian audience. While the cynical Athenian is undoubtedly selfish and unscrupulous, his unwillingness to go along with the new regime could be viewed as defensible. After all, the new regime was established through trickery—the manipulation of an Assembly meeting by the city's women, led by the demagogic Praxagora—and it mandates very un-Athenian practices in making property and sex communal possessions. Arguably, the cynical Athenian's skepticism is preferable to the naiveté of his interlocutor, who cannot wait to turn all his property over on the basis of a decree from a hijacked Assembly.

In assessing how 'bad' this 'bad citizen' is, moreover, it is important to keep in mind that, while his refusal to comply with the new order is at odds with the compliance of others within the comedy, his selfishness is fully consistent with that attributed to Athenians in general by Praxagora earlier in the comedy (206–207; cf. 307–310, 380–382):

> You take public money in wages,
> and you each look out for a way to gain a profit for yourselves,
> while the public interest gets kicked around like Aesimus.

> τὰ δημόσια γὰρ μισθοφοροῦντες χρήματα
> ἰδίᾳ σκοπεῖσθ' ἕκαστος ὅ τι τις κερδανεῖ,
> τὸ δὲ κοινὸν ὥσπερ Αἴσιμος κυλίνδεται.

Aristophanes could easily have simplified his portrayal of this cynical character and treated him as an anti-citizen, like the sykophant, whose values are directly antithetical to those of Athenians at large and who therefore deserves to be abused and expelled. Instead, Aristophanes links his selfishness to that of Athenians in general, and has the cynical Athenian invoke this widespread selfishness in defense of his actions: he will not contribute his goods to the common pool, since 'It's not our ancestral way' (777–778). We should be alert to the possibility, therefore,

[25] Sommerstein 1998, 21.

that what we have in the cynical Athenian is not so much an anti-Athenian as a 'prototypical' Athenian everyman, challenging the comic utopia the women are seeking to establish.[26] While this may not make him an admirable character, this renders him more complex than a simply and straightforwardly 'bad' stock character.

The ambiguities surrounding the cynical Athenian within the comedy make him an excellent vehicle for exploring tensions among citizens offstage. If we view this scene against its Athenian backdrop, it can be read as a reflection on problems inherent in citizenship within the democracy, specifically the tension between individual selfishness and civic sharing. The comedy invites this reading, as it explicitly refers to the widespread selfishness of Athenians and explores the problem of civic sharing, albeit in the extraordinary terms of the comedy. Indeed, the sort of sharing required by the women's regime might be seen as a comic amplification and parody of that sought by the Athenian democracy. As noted earlier, civic ideology called on Athenians to be ready to pool their common resources by contributing their 'bodies and property' to the city. The women's regime takes this ideology to its logical—or illogical—conclusion in requiring Athenians to surrender their bodies (i.e., as sexual objects) and property completely to the state.

Just as the women's regime in *Ecclesiazusae* runs up against individual selfishness in the person of the cynical Athenian, so too democratic Athens found that citizens were not uniformly ready to contribute to the common pool by carrying out their share of duties.[27] The cynical Athenian of *Ecclesiazusae* takes a watchful stance, observing his fellow-citizens to make sure that they will contribute their fair shares before he contributes his (750–753; 769–770; 786–788; 859). It is precisely this shrewd wariness toward civic duty that Demosthenes warns Athenians against in his speech *On the Symmories* (354/3 BCE) (14.15):

> For you will notice, men of Athens, that whenever you have collectively formed some project and after this each individual has realized that it was his personal duty to carry it out, nothing has ever escaped you; but whenever you have formed your project and after this have looked to one another to carry it out, each expecting to do nothing while his neighbor worked, then nothing has succeeded with you.

[26] On the role of 'prototypes' in concept-formation and categorization, see Sluiter and Rosen 2003, 5–8, drawing on research in cognitive psychology and linguistics by Rosch 1999 and others.

[27] *Pace* Herman 2006, 392, who believes that 'freeloading' was 'reduced to a bare minimum' in Athens.

> ὁρᾶτε γάρ, ὦ ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι, ὅτι, ὅσα μὲν πώποθ' ἅπαντες ἐβουλήθητε καὶ μετὰ ταῦτα τὸ πράττειν αὐτὸς ἕκαστος ἑαυτῷ προσήκειν ἡγήσατο, οὐδὲν πώποθ' ὑμᾶς ἐξέφυγεν, ὅσα δ' ἐβουλήθητε μέν, μετὰ ταῦτα δ' ἀπεβλέψατ' εἰς ἀλλήλους ὡς αὐτὸς μὲν ἕκαστος οὐ ποιήσων, τὸν δὲ πλησίον πράξοντα, οὐδὲν πώποθ' ὑμῖν ἐγένετο.

Although Demosthenes is all too ready to accuse those who oppose his policies of shirking their civic duties (cf. 8.21–24; 9.74), his portrayal of citizen psychology and the temptation to allow others to carry civic burdens is quite plausible.[28]

Aristotle, in his *Nicomachean Ethics*, insightfully elaborates on the challenge that mutual distrust and wariness among citizens can pose to a state (1167b10):

> Base men ... try to get more than their share of benefits, but take less than their share of labors and liturgies [cf. Pl. *R.* 343d]. And while each desires this for himself, he scrutinizes his neighbor to prevent him from doing likewise; for if they do not keep watch over one another, the public interest goes to ruin. The result is civil strife, everybody trying to make others do what is right, but refusing to do it themselves.

> τοὺς δὲ φαύλους ... πλεονεξίας ἐφιεμένους ἐν τοῖς ὠφελίμοις, ἐν δὲ τοῖς πόνοις καὶ ταῖς λειτουργίαις ἐλλείποντας· ἑαυτῷ δ' ἕκαστος βουλόμενος ταῦτα τὸν πέλας ἐξετάζει καὶ κωλύει· μὴ γὰρ τηρούντων τὸ κοινὸν ἀπόλλυται. συμβαίνει οὖν αὐτοῖς στασιάζειν, ἀλλήλους μὲν ἐπαναγκάζοντας, αὐτοὺς δὲ μὴ βουλομένους τὰ δίκαια ποιεῖν.

If selfishness and mutual distrust among citizens in Athens did not reach this level, these were nonetheless forces to be reckoned with as the city sought to induce citizens to serve the common good by performing their civic duties.[29]

Aristophanes' cynical Athenian in *Ecclesiazusae* nicely embodies this dangerous potential for individual selfishness and shirking to threaten civic enterprises. His extended presence in this comedy's center calls attention, as Aristophanes does elsewhere as well, to the obstinate resistance of self-interested individuals to group enterprises on and off the comic stage.[30] Viewed properly then, this cynical citizen is not simply an anti-citizen but an embodiment of selfish traits present to varying degrees among all Athenians. Aristophanes suggests that political life, on or off the comic stage, must come to terms with this facet of human

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[28] Cf. Th. 1.141.7; Lys. 20.23; D. 2.30; 4.7; 10.28.

[29] On wariness, posturing, and citizenship in Athens, see Christ 2006, 35–40.

[30] Cf. Ober 1998, 148–149: 'Aristophanes (like Thucydides) confronts his audience with the limits of Athenian public-spiritedness, and also with the insidious potential of personal greed and self-interest to undercut political solutions to social ills'.

nature. 'Badness' in a civic context turns out not to be an isolated phenomenon or one so easily transferred to a scapegoat and driven from the city.

5. *Conclusion*

That Athenians were drawn to a model of society that distinguished sharply between the mass of good citizens and a deviant minority of bad citizens is apparent in their discussion both of proper behavior in the legal sphere and of the obligation to carry out basic civic duties, including military service. This model was ideologically appealing, as it allowed Athenians to envision their city as one in which citizens were (almost) uniformly committed to the ideals of good citizenship and unified in their opposition to, and condemnation of, any who might be tempted to flout civic norms and regulations. If, as I have argued, Aristophanes at times calls into question this ideological model by suggesting that bad citizenship may, in fact, be rooted in the city's institutions and in the selfish and cynical attitudes of Athenians at large, it is natural to wonder how receptive his audiences were to his analysis of the situation. The longevity and ubiquity of this ideological model of the democratic city in Athenian discourse suggests that, notwithstanding Aristophanes' insights into the nature and roots of bad citizenship, Athenians continued to find attractive the idea that bad citizens were an exceptional and deviant minority within the city and easily distinguished from the mass of good citizens.

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CHAPTER EIGHT

THE BAD BOYFRIEND, THE FLATTERER AND THE SYKOPHANT: RELATED FORMS OF THE *KAKOS* IN DEMOCRATIC ATHENS

Nick Fisher

1. *Introduction*

This chapter has three sections, all of which seek to bring into closer association the three abusive character stereotypes of my title,[1] vituperatively designating individuals as (a) a *pornos* ('male whore'), *euruprôktos* ('wide-arse'), *katapugôn* ('up the arse') or other label for an immoral boyfriend ('*erômenos*') of an older man; (b) a *kolax* or other label (such as *episitios*, 'food-earner', *gelôtopoios* or *bômolokhos*, 'jester',[2] and in the fourth

[1] Two of them (lovers and flatterers) are combined already in the title of Scholtz 2004, applied to the relations between Paphlagon, the Sausage-Seller, and Demos in *Knights*. Some signs of these connections can be found also in Carey 1994, Sommerstein 1996, and Davidson 1997, 267–277.

[2] The origins of the terms *parasitos* and *bômolokhos* are interesting. *Parasitoi* were cult-officials with set dining rights at certain sanctuaries (see above all Athen. 234d–235e, with Davies 1996, 634–637 and 2000), and *bômolokhoi* were marginal characters who frequented altars, seeking shamelessly through flattery, deceit or theft to get illicit shares of sacrificial food and drink (e.g. Harpocr. p. 76, 9, Pherecrates, fr. 150 KA, Ar. *Eq*. 902, 1194, with the important treatment by Frontisi-Ducroux 1984). *Bômolokhoi* then became those who made vulgar or incessant jokes or generally fooled around, often as a means of acquiring shares in food and drink, and parasites was used as a more general term for such flatterers, hangers-on and food scroungers. This suggests a strong parallelism seen between cultic or civic feasts and less public *sumposia* (Schmitt-Pantel 1992), and we may note that officials at Athens called *oinoptai* ('wine-choosers'?) had responsibilities for ensuring appropriate shares of wine and access to lighting for the participants at certain festival feasts (the Apaturia, and probably others as well), and others called *protenthai* (tasters) operated also at the Apaturia and perhaps others (see Eup. fr. 219 KA, Athen. 171d, 425a–b, and cf. Fisher 2000, 372 and n. 75). They seem well established, perhaps archaic, and one can compare the officials already in place in late-seventh or early-sixth-century Tiryns to regulate civic feasting, the *platiwoinoi*, and their overseers the *platiwoinarchoi* (*SEG* 30. 380).

century *parasitos*) for flatterer or toady; or (c) a *sukophantês*, one involved in legal operations for the wrong motives.[3] First I shall suggest that such characters were all seen as threats to the moral values of the city and the cohesive running of its institutions because of the moral perception that all these *kakoi* offended against standards of reciprocity which were shared strongly across all Athenian social classes, and are not to be seen as 'elite values' (section 2). Second, I shall argue that a key to understanding the prevalence of such bogey figures in the Athenian collective imaginary from at least the period of the Archidamian War lies in the effects of the post-Cleisthenic institutions which encouraged much wider participation, both in direct democratic politics and in collectively organized festivals and other leisure activities (section 3). Finally, I shall suggest that these specific moral concerns found expression in a series of legislative changes from the second half of the fifth century to the beginning of the fourth century BCE (section 4).

These three types of derogatory labels in particular have two things in common: first, they were hard to define, because they imputed behavior which crossed vague and contested boundaries; and second, they were very often attached in this period to the same individuals, a group of young newcomers to the world of the social and political elites, who were popularly supposed to be prepared to threaten or break moral protocols in order to share in the political and social lives of the elite. This also helps to explain why terms such as whore, flatterer, and sykophant were used for the representation of relations in comedy between leading politicians and the collective *dêmos* (itself a negative inversion of the positive idea in Pericles' Funeral Speech that the citizens should be *erastai* of their city).[4] But whereas much recent work (e.g. Wohl 2002, Rosenbloom 2003, 2004, Scholtz 2004) focuses on the treatment of the 'demagogues' as flatterers and sykophants, who professed their 'love' for the *dêmos*, I am interested here in asking slightly different questions: first, why so many minor political figures, *kômôidoumenoi* we know less about, were often represented as current

[3] I use sykophant with a *k* to indicate the Greek term *sukophantês*, as distinct from the English 'sycophant', which has come (from the late sixteenth century according to the *OED*) to be used most often in the sense of the Greek *kolax*: the dual usage may reflect a continuing view that similarly unscrupulous and devious forms of behavior are involved in both, and the shift towards 'gross flattery' may reflect a feeling that deceitful accusations were more often made at a royal or noble court than in a law court.

[4] On the ideals of erotic reciprocity expressed in this idea, see especially Monoson 2000, 64–87, Wohl 2002, 30–72.

or ex-rent boys, as flatterers and as sykophants; second, what social realities (if any) lay behind these charges; and finally how far these criticisms and their underlying anxieties and values not only reflected the older elite's snobbery, contempt, and fear of losing their exclusive powers and prestige, but were also accepted and shared by popular audiences in the theater, the Assembly, or the law courts.

2. *Stereotypes and reciprocity*

2.1. *The boyfriend*

First then I seek to justify the claim that these three labels designated powerful *exempla* of the *kakos* or *ponêros* in large part because their behavior broke rules of reciprocity signed up to by all classes of citizens. With the 'boyfriends' (*erômenoi*), some major controversial topics cannot be avoided. One greatly disputed issue is what an *erômenos* had to do to be considered to have broken the moral protocols and be labelled as 'bad', as *ponêros, aiskhros, pornos*, or *bdeluros* (see for such terms e.g. Ar. *Wealth* 149–156, Aeschin. 1.30–31, 41, 154–155, 185). Philosophical discourses agreed that distinguishing between good and bad erotic relationships between males was both difficult and vital, and that it was performed differently in different *poleis*.[5] Broadly, two related but distinct areas of offense seem involved. First, there is an opposition between love, affection, and mutual respect, on the one hand, and calculated material advantage on the other: 'good' boys were fond of their lovers and felt they benefited educationally, morally or socially from the relationship; 'bad' or 'disgraced' boys 'sold' themselves or their bodies for the sake of money, excessive gifts or other forms of access to the good life. Second, there are sexual practices: bad boys were held to surrender themselves too readily or enthusiastically to acts which were widely held to be, variously, female, slavish, shameful and degrading, or *hubris* against one's person. One debate is focused on which area of concern was more important; the other on whether the sexual wrongdoing was presented as the passive acceptance of 'shameful' penetration, as effeminization, as a symptom of an insatiability of desires for any pleasures, or

[5] Pausanias in Pl. *Smp.* 180c–185c; Socrates in X. *Smp.* 8.

perhaps as all three.[6] On the first topic, I have argued elsewhere that what counted most in the interpretation of these laws (as the titles of the offenses themselves, *hetairêsis* or *porneia*, suggest) was whether the basis of the relationship was essentially mercenary or affective;[7] but also it seems clear that distinctions about sexual practices were important, and there was a common assumption that mercenary boys, like all prostitutes, were ready to do whatever the lover asked. The texts provide some support for all the contested ways of assigning 'depravity' in sexual practices.[8] What needs emphasis here is that these related modes of being 'bad' could be and were portrayed as the converse of a good relationship of reciprocity, of an exchange of positive emotions, of shared pleasures, mutual goodwill and reciprocal benefits.

Our sources may be broadly divided into the philosophical tradition (in this context above all Plato's *Symposium* and *Phaedrus*, and Xenophon's *Symposium*), directed to a literate readership and involving dialogues set among the richest inhabitants of Athens; the forensic speeches directed to the popular juries (here above all Aeschines' *Timarchus*); and drama, a genre aimed at a large and equally popular audience.[9] In the view of most scholars, while all these genres (and implicitly most of the iconographic representations) express disapproval of boys who engage in full penetrative sex or experience any sexual pleasure, attitudes to homosexual love and relationships were more positive in the philosophical tradition than in the other more populist

[6] Dover 1978 (1989²) and Foucault 1985 set the debates off and remain fundamental; Halperin 1990 and Winkler 1990 contributed much to the sense of a new orthodoxy (though they were not entirely in agreement), and have provoked varied reactions. Davidson 1997 offers a valuable criticism of the idea that passive, feminizing or enslaving submission to penetration was central to moral evaluations, and Davidson 2001 offers an excellent survey of the history of the debate following Dover's first article on the subject (Dover 1964); cf. also Wohl 2002, 1–16; interesting alternative analyses include Calame 1999 and Ludwig 2002.

[7] Fisher 2001, 36–53.

[8] Briefly, I agree with Davidson that the penetration issue has been much exaggerated (and the 'insatiability' one underplayed), but not that penetration played a very small part in such thinking. We need not decide, I suspect, whether 'broad-arse' or 'up the arse' used of 'boyfriends' when taken literally suggests a permanent anal distension or anal flexibility, or both; such terms in any case get further widened, and may be applied to any form of sexual interest in the buttocks (Hubbard 1998, 58), or (like 'bugger' or 'arse-hole' today) to cover any general form of sexually (or indeed any) disgusting behavior (Davidson 1997, 172–173).

[9] Cf. Christ 1998, 72–117, for an excellent assessment of these three types of evidence in the context of attitudes to sykophancy.

genres. On both these points, some modifications are needed; and the differences between the genres have been exaggerated.[10]

On sexual pleasures, Socrates' speech in Xenophon's *Symposium* (ch. 8) has been central to the debate. He emphasizes the emotional gulf between the relationship where the lover's interest is purely physical, for the enjoyment of the boy's body, and the boy feels he is being used as if he were a whore, and the relationship where both partners have a deep affection for each other, expressed at one point as a shared *erôs philias*, an eroticized passion for their mutual friendship.[11] It has been demonstrated, I believe, by Thomsen, contrary to the usual view,[12] that this good form of eroticized friendship does allow (somewhat allusively) room for mutual physical pleasures as well as shared intellectual/emotional delights, though 'Socrates' insists that as the physical side is satiated and wanes, the mental enjoyments get ever stronger.[13] This interpretation brings Xenophon's Socrates closer to his Platonic counterpart's hints in the *Symposium* and *Phaedrus* that affectionate and philosophically orientated relationships may experience some mutual sexual pleasures, though they prove far less intense and satisfying than the intellectual excitements. Pausanias' speech in the *Symposium* claims that where lover and beloved each have the right feelings and aims it is a fine thing (*kalon*) for the beloved to 'gratify' (*kharizesthai*) the lover (184d–185c). This usage[14] probably implies full sexual activity, but is agnostic on the possibility of sexual pleasure for the beloved. Less ambiguously, Socrates' second speech in the *Phaedrus* allows that some philosophically serious couples may, without fault, in the intensity of their mutual love, slip into physical expression of their desires, and the boy is said to reciprocate by experiencing his own forms of intense

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[10] See also now Nussbaum 2002, 60–65, finding similarities between the fragments of Aeschylus' *Myrmidons*, Xenophon's *Hiero*, Aeschines' *Timarchus* and Pausanias' speech in the *Symposium*.

[11] Socrates' first (non-lover) speech in *Phdr*. 238e–241d explores a similar line in greater detail, emphasizing that the beloved will get no pleasures from his older, jealous, persistent lover.

[12] As adopted e.g. by Dover 1978, 52–53, Foucault 1985, 223–224, Halperin 1990, 130, Calame 1999, 190, Fisher 2001, 43, and Huss *ad loc*.

[13] See Thomsen 2001, Fisher 2006, 232–236.

[14] This usage is found also throughout the discussions in the *Phaedrus*: e.g., the Lysianic' non-lover's speech argues strongly that the beloved should choose to 'gratify' (*kharizesthai*) the man who will, through longer-term care and friendship, offer more reciprocal benefits (*kharis*) (231b–234c).

desire, deep-felt affection and some physical pleasure, if not in exactly the same way, with the same awareness, or to the same extent as the lover (*Phdr.* 254–255).[15]

In all these instances, the circumspect and allusive language reflects no doubt the social need for 'cultured' lovers to maintain discretion about their activities. The primary moral distinction then for most, arguably all, of these elite texts was whether the relationship was based on an unequal and calculating deal, or on a more reciprocal exchange of affection, trust and concern for each other's well-being. Some philosophical texts (above all Plato's *Lysis* and *Phaedrus*) analyze in detail differences in types of reciprocity between lover and beloved. These texts suggest how partners' varied goals, desires, emotions and timescales present many consequential possibilities for uncertainty and tension, and identify increasingly complex attempts at resolving them.[16] On the other hand, the physical consequence of the bad type was thought to be sex purely on the lover's terms (normally no doubt assumed to be anal penetration), which boyfriends would probably not enjoy;[17] hence Xenophon says the boy in such a relationship looks on as if sober, while the lover enjoys himself as a drunk; the boy looks rather to the money, gifts, or other benefits in terms of luxuries or political advantages (Pausanias at Pl. *Smp.* 184b agrees).

The orators naturally are as reticent linguistically as the philosophers, working by suggestion and innuendo, and are more often concerned to attack their opponents for breaching the moral protocols and (if they had supposedly been promiscuous and dissolute boyfriends)

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[15] As Sihvola 2002, 200–202 has pointed out, Aristotle makes a similar point as a complicated (and neglected) example in logic: a man in love would prefer to have the disposition of the beloved to 'gratify' him (*kharizesthai*) but not actually going through with the act to the beloved's granting the act without having the disposition; therefore the returned affection (*phileisthai*) is more important for the lover than the act of intercourse, and affection is its goal, not intercourse (*APr.* 68a40–b7). The implication seems to be that what both would want most would be (primarily) the affection and (secondarily) the intercourse.

[16] See e.g. Price 1989, ch. 1; and the many sophisticated accounts in Nussbaum and Sihvola 2002, especially the articles by Nussbaum, Price, and Sihvola.

[17] The possibility that some men who had been sexually abused as children acquired a disposition towards sexual intercourse with males (presumably being buggered), regardless of the quality of the relationship, was recognized at least by Aristotle and his school and treated as an aberrant form of pleasure, comparable to eating coal. Arist. *EN* 1148b15–1149a20, and [Arist.] *Probl.* 4.26; see Dover 1978, 168–170, Sihvola 2002, 216–217.

endangering their civic status and careers thereby, whether actually prosecuting, like Aeschines' case against Timarchus, or merely threatening a prosecution or stirring up the mud (e.g. Andoc. 1.99–101, D. 22.21–32). Yet what is most striking about Aeschines' speech is the care with which he too distinguishes proper from depraved behavior, noble boys from bad boys (or *pornoi*). Respectable love affairs based at the *gumnasia* are presented as an essential part of the culture of free Greek men, something all fathers hope for their sons, and there is no suggestion that such genuinely affectionate and loving relationships should avoid sexual contacts (though naturally there is no hint of what sexual acts may be proper or whether there may be pleasure for the boy). In contrast, Aeschines' position is that the wicked Timarchus willingly submitted to the shameful and feminine pleasures insisted on by his many lovers, but not that he particularly enjoyed them.[18]

Old Comedy is able to be more sexually explicit, and tends to be skeptical of the distinction between respectable and mercenary relationships. It assumes that all boyfriends, and indeed all those who parade themselves effeminately, have become *euruprôktoi*, through regular buggery or being captured in adultery (Ar. *Clouds* 1085–1104, and many other jokes, cf. below). In particular Ar. *Wealth* 149–159 collapses humorously the supposed distinction between good and bad boys based on the distinction between cash and non-monetary, conventional presents. In their discourse on the pervasiveness of money in the world, Chremylus suggests that Corinthian *hetairai* ignore poor clients, but readily offer their arses to those who offer large sums; Carion adds that the boys do the same, for money, not for their lovers' sake, and cynically responds to Chremylus' suggestion that good (*khrêstoi*) boys are ashamed to ask their lovers for cash, but do ask for a horse or a hunting dog with the comment that 'they cover up their *mokhthêria* with a word'.[19] It does not follow from this that comedy—or non-elite Athenians in general—rejected the importance of this distinction and took a hostile view to the

[18] Cf. Dover 1978, 39–49, Fisher 2001, 48–49, 58–62. Lys. 3.3–6 seeks to raise sympathy and indignation by a similar contrast: the speaker (naturally) wished to bear the 'accident' of his middle-aged desire for a vulnerable Plataean youth as a *sôphrôn* and *kosmios* man, and to win his friendship/affection by doing him good services, whereas Simon his opponent thought to force him by hybristic and lawless acts to do what he wanted.

[19] Cf. *Av.* 703–707, where presents of valuable birds enable lovers to persuade hitherto determinedly resistant boys to allow intercrural sex.

admiration and pursuit of beautiful youths and romanticized homosexual relations; rather, it could adopt a cynical attitude to the supposed boundaries of good and bad behavior. It is seriously simplistic and one-sided to conclude that the prevailing attitude of the jurors to pederastic relationships, which was appealed to in law court speeches and the theater, was distaste towards an alien upper-class practice.[20]

The *ponêroi* boys then would offer pleasure to the partner (often described as giving a favor, *kharizesthai*), but would not, as would the good boys, be in a properly reciprocal relationship, involving a genuine *kharis* of shared—if in part diverse—pleasures and exchanges of longer-term goodwill, prestige, and social advantages.[21] In practice outsiders' views on whether relationships were primarily based on mercenary, selfish advantages, or on shared affection and trust, would be based not on detailed knowledge, but—if on anything—on their demeanor and discourses, together and apart, and a sense of how many lovers a youth seemed to accept, how blatantly he flirted and showed off, and whether he seemed to be benefiting considerably in terms of greater wealth or access to other pleasures.[22] Provided that lovers and boyfriends preserved discretion, and avoided the appearance of promiscuity or the enjoyment of new wealth and luxury, speculation about sexual practices would be limited and harmless; conversely, where suspicions of impropriety were aroused, preparedness to believe that the boys would agree

[20] As do Sissa 1999, and Hubbard 1998; see Fisher 2001, 38, 43, 51, 2006. The groping joke in Ar. *Av.* 137–142 is better explained in my view as an unrealistic fantasy that might be shared by all Athenians, that a father would make very easy a sexual approach to his son, rather than just a reassertion of an ordinary father's total hostility to any approach. Hubbard 2006 develops his position by arguing that Euripides' lost *Chrysippus*, in which the first ever instance of homosexual love was Laius' pursuit, rape and murder of Chrysippus, treated the theme in order to marginalize and condemn the whole practice of pederasty, whereas Aeschylus and Sophocles presented such love more positively; but the surviving fragments and summaries of the *Chrysippus* (*TGF* 5.2 no. 78, frr. 838–844) seem just as compatible with a presentation of Laius as an excessive and hybristic lover whose rape problematized the dangers of pederastic love, but did not condemn all forms of it: cf. Wohl 2002, 227 n. 36 ('this mythic tradition finds the origin of "just" love in the violent and incestuous sexuality of the tyrant').

[21] For Aristotle's views on the inequalities in desires and benefits, see Sihvola 2002, 217–218.

[22] Deeply illuminating for the roles of gossip and scandal are 'Lysias' speech and Socrates' reply in the *Phaedrus*, and the whole of Aeschines' speech against Timarchus; Fisher 2001, 49–51. The dangers of gossip are also illustrated by Aristophanes' claims that he deserves credit for not cruising the gymnasia for boys and not spreading rumors about boyfriends to please disgruntled ex-lovers (*Wasps* 1023–1028, *Peace*, 762–763).

to anything for the money or the goods would encourage the use of labels (*pornos, katapugôn, euruprôktos, kinaidos* etc.) implying self-prostitution or ready acceptance or enjoyment of buggery, as well as other forms of debauchery.[23]

This is the vital point for my argument in this chapter. It was precisely those upwardly mobile boys or youths who were poorer than their older associates who would be especially vulnerable to such accusations of profiting from inappropriate relationships and seeking to advance their social position, contacts, and careers, especially if they could be associated (however loosely) with a number of lovers or friends. It would then be those youths who made the move into city politics, necessarily attracting enemies as well as friends, who would encounter more intensely hostile gossip and vituperation, and become at that point the butt of jokes in the licensed abuse at public festivals.

The city's *gumnasia* and wrestling/training grounds were recognized as the primary locations for homoerotic meetings and assignations, and youthful athletes training and competing naked formed an especially preferred physical type for such relationships.[24] Yet it has been noticed that in Old Comedy currently successful athletes (boys or adults) do not feature strongly as *kômôidoumenoi*.[25] The main exception here is Autolycus, an athletic victor, treated with great respect as Callias' very discreet and proper boyfriend in Xenophon's *Symposium*, but mocked mercilessly as 'well bored' (*eutrêsios*) by Eupolis, in a play apparently attacking Autolycus (after whom it was named), his father Lycon, and Callias (more on this below). Comic poets were perhaps under social pressure to refrain from making rude remarks about attractive young athletes too soon, given the considerable interest Athenians took in the appearance, performance, and victories of its outstanding competitors, at Panhellenic and *polis* games and contests, as attested before and after this period, e.g. in *kalos* names on vases, Plato's dialogues, and Aeschines 1.55–157.[26] A few more of those who were stigmatized by these labels

[23] The assumption that effeminate and shamelessly amenable boyfriends are also likely to be equally shameless heterosexual pursuers of *hetairai* and other men's wives is found very widely, notably in the *agôn* in *Clouds*, the treatments of Alcibiades' sexuality, and Aeschines' speech against Timarchus.

[24] E.g. Plato, *Charmides, Lysis,* Aeschin. 1.134–157.

[25] Sommerstein 1996, 331.

[26] The debates glimpsed from the *graffiti* from the archons' rubbish dumps discussed by Steiner 2002 suggest gossip might focus on whether a particular youth was a *kalos* or a *katapugôn* (see below).

may well have had earlier careers in athletics, or at least attracted attention in the *gumnasia*. Thus comedy seems to have generally held off from attacking the reputations of attractive youths with lovers where the jury of public opinion was still out (incidentally supporting the view expressed above that comedy did not absolutely oppose pederasty). However, once one had made the move into public life, accusations of having previously broken the rules (e.g. with one's current associates) were fair game.

2.2. *The flatterer*

Less controversy surrounds the definition of the *kolax* compared to boyfriend and sykophant.[27] Philosophical discourses explain why the *kolax* is seen as 'a wild beast and a big cause of harm' (*Phaedrus* 240b), or among the 'evils in the state' (Arist. *Pol.* 1263b23, picking up Pl. *R.* 465c),[28] by observing that flatterers focus on the excessive pursuit of pleasure at the expense of true friendship and honesty, the freedom of the independent citizen, and the proper reciprocity of social exchanges. The reciprocity claimed by the participants and the pleasure involved are thus problematized (as in cases of 'bad' sexual relations).[29] In the *Rhetoric* Aristotle noted that people like being admired, honored, and liked, and hence to be flattered and have a flatterer is pleasurable; he defined the *kolax* as 'an apparent admirer and an apparent friend' (*Rh.* 1371a21–23). In the *Ethics*, the *kolax* provides excessive pleasure for his own advantage (*EN* 1108a29–33; cf. *EN* 1127a6–10); all *kolakes* are thete-like and *tapeinoi*, and the relationship is *doulikon* (*EN* 1125a1). Extravagant people may give money to *kolakes* or others who provide

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[27] Studies of the comic *kolax*/parasite include Ribbeck 1883, Arnott 1968, 1996, 543, Brown 1992, Damon 1997, Fisher 2000, 371–378, Storey 2003, esp. 188–197, and most fully in recent years Tylawsky 2002, who makes a good attempt to relate the development of the comic figures to the political and social developments in Athens, but has less to say on connections with sykophancy than with cloakless beggardom, and philosophical and other pretentiousness (*alazoneia*), and nothing at all on sexual relations. Lofberg 1920 noted the congruence of sykophants and parasites in New Comedy (Greek and Roman), but does not deal with late fifth-century material.

[28] At *Pol.* 1292a17–25 the relations of the demagogues to the *dêmos* is the same as, or analogous to that between *kolakes* and tyrants.

[29] The parallel is noted in 'Socrates'' non-lover speech (*Phdr.* 240a–b): the *kolax* is 'a dreadful beast and a great cause of harm', but unlike the disagreeable lover, nature has mixed in this case 'a certain not uncultivated pleasure' (ἡδονήν τινα οὐκ ἄμουσον).

some pleasure (*EN* 1121b1–4), and people who like being honored also like flatterers, inferiors who pretend falsely to be real friends (*EN* 1159a15–20).[30]

This philosophical discourse thus has a strong concern for the moral errors made by the rich who accept and enjoy the attentions of the flatterers.[31] But we should not conclude that it was only elite or wealthy individuals who felt moral distaste for such relationships.[32] Equal access to public feasts and equal shares to the wine enjoyed at them were regulated in Athens and elsewhere from the archaic period;[33] this suggests that the principles of commensual reciprocity between those of differing social levels were publicly recognized early on.[34] Old Comedy focuses not so much on the moral weakness of the patrons as on the disgraceful lives of the flatterers themselves. This emerges above all as *kolakes* repeatedly justified themselves in set-piece speeches,[35] shamelessly admitting the degrading, non-reciprocal and servile elements of the parasitical life, having to praise their patrons whatever they say or do, and having to accept, without the chance of retaliation, insults and blows from other, more independent, guests or friends, for the sake of satisfying their insatiable desires and enabling them to eat at others' expense without making their own contribution (*sumbolon*). The justifications (all collected by Athenaeus, in his significantly lengthy treatment of the parasite at 235f–240c),[36] range from the very simple and blatant 'how pleasant it is to scoff hot fish from the pan without paying the *sumbola*',[37] to much more elaborately paradoxical statements: that it is parasites who take the values of friendship and sociability to their fullest

[30] In the [Platonic] *Definitions* 415e, *kolakeia* is defined as 'a social relationship with the goal of pleasure apart from the good; a habit to form relationships for pleasure exceeding the mean'; cf. also Thphr. *Char.* 2.

[31] The problems posed by the 'parasite' for the cultivated elites of the empire, dedicated to the pursuit of 'true friendship' are explored by (*inter alios*) Plutarch (*How to Tell a Flatterer from a Friend*) and Lucian (*On the Parasite*), see Nesselrath 1985, Whitmarsh 2000, 2006.

[32] Isocrates (*On Peace* 8.4) makes the point that 'you' (i.e. the Assembly, though this is of course a pamphlet, not a real speech) know the harm done by flatterers to many great houses, hate those who practice this technique in private lives, criticize those who take pleasure in them, yet delight in flattering orators.

[33] Eup. fr. 219 KA, Athen. 171d, 425a–b, *SEG* 30.380, see n. 2 above.

[34] Cf. also Davies 1996, 634–638.

[35] The sequence apparently started with Epicharmus, and in Athens with the chorus in Eupolis' *Kolakes*. See Damon 1997, 23–36, Tylawsky 2002, 59–77.

[36] On which see especially Whitmarsh 2000.

[37] Phrynichus 60 KA = Athen. 229a.

extent; that they are genuinely democratic, are as valuable as Olympic victors, or were invented and supported by Zeus Philius;[38] and finally that parasites are ready to endure any number of insults and loss of manhood for the sake of pleasure.[39] The parasite's persistent goal is 'to be a good friend to his friends in deeds not words alone' (Antiphanes 193 KA, lines 8–10).

There were probably a good few relationships between Athenian wealthy elites and those less rich, which were only too easily labeled 'parasitical'. By contrast, Xenophon offers an idealized, positive version of the relationship between two real characters (if not necessarily a real relationship), the wealthy and non-political Criton and the poor but ambitious Archedemus (*Mem.* 2.9), a text that shows beautifully the delicate boundary between *kolakeia* and a genuine friendship and *kharis* relationship, albeit between those of unequal wealth.[40] The description minimizes the gap in status and wealth, and emphasizes the value of the political and financial services of the *kolax*, and the 'friendship' and mutual services involved. As Xenophon's language itself reveals, however, the relationship could easily be described by outsiders as one essentially built on *kolakeia* and sykophancy: the arrangement involved Archedemus making threats of litigation against the 'sykophants' which were only too easy to be themselves labeled sykophantic, and resulted in 'presents' of regular food which could be seen as the rewards for *kolakeia* and as mercenary as the boyfriend's hounds (2.9.8). Xenophon thus indicates his awareness of both ways of looking at it; and this would be heightened if we also believe, as I think we should, that Xenophon expected his readers to connect this Archedemus to the Archedemus of Pelekes (*PA* 2326) who had a dubious career as a 'demagogue' and was a frequent *kômôidoumenos*.[41] In the *Hellenica* he mentions his man as a leading champion of the people, with respon-

[38] Timocles 8 KA = Athen. 237d–f, Antiphanes 80 KA = Athen. 238a–b, Eubulus 72 KA = Athen. 239a, Diodorus 2 KA = Athen. 239b–f.

[39] Aristophon 5 KA = Athen. 238b–c, Antiphanes 193 KA = Athen. 238d–f, Axionicus 6 KA = Athen. 239f–240b.

[40] Cf. also the detailed discussion of how to distinguish a flatterer from a real friend from the perspective of a remarkably scrupulous tyrant in Xenophon's *Hiero*.

[41] Though Azoulay 2004 is doubtful of the identification, and doubts any irony here in Xenophon, I agree with Davies 1975, 377, Osborne 1990, 97–98, and Christ 1998, 87–88 that the identification is intended; the phrase at *Mem.* 2.9.4 'very capable in speech and action, though poor' makes it certain the same Archedemus is meant.

sibility for the *diôbelia*,[42] who began the attacks on the generals after Arginusae with a prosecution of Erasinides (X. *HG* 1.7.2). A later public speech represented him as an able speaker and pro-Theban politician who faced many dangers as a result (Aeschin. 3.139), while a prosecution speech presented him as a blear-eyed politician and embezzler at whose house and with whom, in the view of many, the younger Alcibiades drank, reclined under the same cloak, and danced the *kômos* during the day (Lys. 14.25). In comedy he was blear-eyed, and attacked for foreign birth and *mokhthêria* (Eup. *Baptai*, fr. 80 KA, *Frogs* 416–421, 588). Xenophon's story seems to carry an interesting implication that (whatever lay behind this individual case) in principle some new politicians seeking to make their careers might be prepared to engage in a (perhaps temporary?) reciprocal relationship with rich Athenian 'friends' who were attempting to pursue the path of 'quietism', enjoying their wealth, avoiding direct political involvement and hoping to get away with the minimum of liturgical and other expenditure. But how realistic this possibility seemed to Xenophon or his readers is far from clear.[43]

2.3. *The sykophant*

Archedemus then was seen as both a flatterer and a 'sykophant'; the intimate connection is neatly made in a fragment of Aristophanes' *Storks* (452 KA).

> If you prosecute one unjust man, testimony against you
> will be presented by twelve, the food earners (*episitioi*) attached to the rest
>
> ἢν γὰρ ἕν' ἄνδρ' ἄδικον σὺ διώκῃς, ἀντιμαρτυροῦσι
> δώδεκα τοῖς ἑτέροις ἐπισίτιοι

The implication is that rich and crooked politicians operate in partnerships, and each maintain their own hungry flatterers to help them get off in court. There has been productive recent debate over the definition and range of uses of the Greek sykophant.[44] The origin of the term, some connection with 'informing about figs', remains

[42] Probably he was a *logistês* (Develin 1989, 179).

[43] See especially Christ 1998, 88–90. On the 'quiet Athenian' and liturgy avoidance, see also Carter 1986, and Christ 1990.

[44] Lofberg 1917, Osborne 1990 and Harvey's reply 1990, Christ 1998 (and in this volume); Rubinstein 2000, Allen 2000, 2003, and Rosenbloom 2002.

obscure.[45] The essence of the broad and wide-ranging offense seems to be engaging, or threatening to engage, in litigation, often as part of a team,[46] for inappropriate motives, that is motives other than the pursuit of revenge for a crime against oneself, family or (perhaps) close friend or the punishment of an offender for the sake of the community. 'Sykophant' is among the most potent of all abuse terms, and the supposed prevalence of such *ponêroi* was often seen as a major threat to the stability of a regime or a cause of *stasis*. Alarm at the danger sykophants posed to civic cohesion was particularly intense in Athens in the last years of the Peloponnesian War and in the propaganda for, and then against, the regime of the Thirty. Only too evidently, it is not a term subject to a clear or legally straightforward definition, and was easy enough to deny, by asserting a personal connection or a patriotic desire to see wrongs brought to justice (cf. Christ in this volume). The assumption often found throughout Old Comedy (and in effect adopted e.g. by Lofberg 1917 and Harvey 1990) that sykophancy could be a lucrative career in itself for many citizens on the make, which some might even proclaim and sustain, has been rightly challenged.[47] Christ's helpful general disjunction operates here to separate out elite, forensic, and comic discourses in the critique of sykophancy.[48] The elite representation of the sykophant is class-centered. It shows a poor and greedy villain preying on the rich, and especially the quiet, non-political rich. Non-elite forensic discourse presents him as a threat to all Athenians, and an anti-democratic force. Christ places Comedy in the middle, facing both ways, translating the class conflict into moralizing condemnation of the *ponêroi* among the poor, especially the younger ones, above all for creating and spreading *stasis*, while not always claiming that the richer victims are innocent. Rubinstein takes the analysis in a different direction, in the context of shared prosecutions: she identifies plausible ways in which prosecutors might make some money and advance their careers—taking money from others to bring or share prosecu-

[45] There are various guesses in ancient commentators. Allen's attempts to connect up multiple sexual associations of fresh and dried figs with ideas of the well-timed expression of 'ripe' anger, as opposed to ill-timed initiation or pretense of anger, (2000, 154–167, 2003, 89–93), may be over-ingenious, but they helpfully recognize a parallel with sexual breaches of norms in terms of the control of desire and pleasures.

[46] On the remarkable prevalence of team-work in prosecution and defense, see above all Rubinstein 2000.

[47] Notably by Osborne 1990, Christ 1998, 63–67 and Rubinstein 2000, 198–200.

[48] 1998, 77–117; this volume.

tions ('straw men'), taking money to withdraw ('deserters'), or to plead incompetently and lose ('saboteurs'), but she still argues that an individual would not be able to keep this activity going long enough for a substantial career without losing his credibility.[49] Her view is that the non-elite moral condemnation of such activities in both comic and forensic contexts, labeling the 'sykophants' *ponêroi*, was based on the reasonable moral view that they threatened the democratic administration of justice, leading to unfair convictions or acquittals. Equally important in my view is to see the moral analysis in terms of the breach of reciprocity: the motto of reciprocity here, that one must 'help friends and harm enemies', implies that one should prosecute offenders for revenge or for justice, but not use the cover of a patriotic service to the city to attack citizens because one was paid to by another, to whom one may anyway have been 'shamefully selling out' one's independence or masculinity for the sake of advancement.[50] In practice, the boundaries in this area too would be delicate and difficult, and once again the most likely suspects of crossing them would be the new politicians, young, from less well-off backgrounds, and seeking to break through into the circles of the elite.

2.4. *Stereotypes in combination: Young men attacked under more than one heading*

It will be helpful now to list some *kômôidoumenoi*, to illustrate the clear and widespread perception found in Old Comedy—and especially in the plays of the Archidamian War—that sykophancy was a practice engaged in above all by the young, rhetorically trained, and ambitious politicians, mostly from hitherto non-elite families. Sykophancy was very often connected with flattery and sexual deviance, as related forms of shameful behavior involving the wrong sort of relationships with those older, wealthier or more experienced. As the list below shows, a good many lesser politicians found themselves the subjects of accusations under two or all three of our labels; and there are other labels too. Many of the rhetors and prosecutors listed here are naturally associated also with sophistic education, and, as politicians with a training in the

[49] Rubinstein 2000, 201–212.

[50] See here the analyses of e.g. Fisher 1998b, Christ 1998, 154–168, and Allen 2000, 50–72. Harris 2005 strengthens the case for seeing juries as seriously concerned to defend the laws from a sense of justice, but seems to me to underestimate the concomitant moral force behind the idea of achieving revenge through the courts (whether or not we choose to label this behavior 'feuding').

new philosophy and rhetoric, as ready perjurers; their roles as flatterers is often indicated by their combination of some or all of poverty, pretentiousness (*alazoneia*), greed, and interest in luxury foods and gambling; and as *arrivistes*, they were often accused of low, foreign, and/or slavish origins.

First we have a group of younger politicians seen as Cleon's associates, the group amusingly described as 'the hundred cursed *kolakes* licking around Cleon's head' (*Wasps* 1030–1037 ~ *Peace* 752–759). If Cleon did early in his career, as Plutarch claims, 'renounce his *philoi* (friends)' in order not to be perverted from just and sound policy choices (*Praec. Ger. Reip.* 806F–807B),[51] it seems clear that this was a pretty empty gesture; he soon gathered around him a large number of men whom he presumably called his *philoi*, while his enemies and the comic poets called them his *kolakes*; he collaborated with them in politics, helped them get posts and entertained them at *sumposia*.[52]

(1) *Euathlus* son of Cephisodemus (*PA* 5238, *PAA* 425665) has the complete set. In the *Acharnians* 704–710 he is called an archer (which implies low and/or foreign birth and perhaps slave status), and appears as one of a group of glib prosecutors intent on harrying the elderly Thucydides son of Melesias. The same picture was apparently presented at fr. 424 KA from the *Holkades* (424 or 423 BCE?), where a collective group (perhaps the chorus of merchant ships) claims they have somewhere else similar problems to the Athenians:[53]

> We have among us an evil (*ponêros*) archer and joint-prosecutor (*sunêgoros*)[54]
> like Euathlus is among your young men …

[51] A proclamation made much of by Connor 1971 in his analysis of the political styles of the 'New Politicians' (1971, 91–93); but cf. Davies 1975, 377.

[52] Cf. Tylawsky 2002, 23–27.

[53] Cf. Olsen *ad loc.*, also the *Wasps* parabasis 1036–1042, where the poet refers to his play at the Lenaea 423 ([very possibly *Holkades*] in which he attacked sykophants) as 'shivers and fevers', who would murder their fathers and grandfathers by night, and 'lying on couches against the unpolitical men (*apragmones*) glue together oaths, summonses, and witness statement'. Sykophants appear here as groups of young, totally unscrupulous, symposiasts who plotted legal campaigns in concert; the image in l. 1040 may perhaps suggest also the idea of the sykophants plotting while reclining at *sumposia*, as well as haunting the beds of their peaceable victims.

[54] Cf. the *bômolokhos sunêgoros* in *Eq.* 1358, who may threaten the jurors with no pay, if they fail to convict. This again links malicious and ruthless shared prosecution with witty jesting typical of sophistry and *kolakes*.

ἔστι τις πονηρὸς ἡμῖν τοξότης ξυνήγορος
ὥσπερ Εὔαθλος παρ' ἡμῖν τοῖς νέοις …

In the *Wasps* (592, 666–667, 947–948) he is a leading prosecutor and Cleon-supporter and an associate of Cleonymus (no. 2); statements in the scholia (on *Ach.* 710) and *Suda* (quoting also Pl.Com. fr. 102 KA and Crat. fr. 82 KA) report that Euathlus was a *ponêros rhêtôr*, *euruprôktos, lalos*, of low birth, which was why Aristophanes called him an archer, as if he were a slave (*hupêretês*). He is also alleged to have been the pupil of Protagoras who prosecuted his master for impiety (Gel. 5.10, Quint. 3.1, D.L. 9.54).

(2) *Cleonymus* (*PA* 8880, *PAA* 579410) the shield-thrower was another *kolax* of Cleon who has a full set, very frequently mocked on a variety of counts. He was portrayed as a glutton, which seems to imply he frequented the tables of the rich as a *kolax* and ate too much (*Ach.* 88, 844, *Eq.* 956–958, 1290–1299, *Birds* 289); as effeminate (implying he was an ex-boyfriend) (*Clouds* 672–675); as a cheating prosecutor with Euathlus (*Wasps* 592, and most famously as a shield-throwing coward (*Clouds* 353, 400, 673, *Wasps* 19, 592, *Peace* 446, 673–676, *Birds* 1475, Crat. fr. 108, Eupolis fr. 352). Epigraphic evidence confirms his political career as a proposer of three decrees in 426/5 BCE (*IG* I^3 61.34, 68.5, 69.3–4).

(3) *Theorus* (*PA* 7223, *PAA* 513680) was a third *kolax* of Cleon at *Wasps* 42–51, 418–419, and a pretentious and deceitful ambassador (*Ach.* 134–166), a perjurer and prosecutor (*Clouds* 400, *Wasps* 418, 599–600), and a luxury-loving and flattering guest at Cleon's *sumposion* (*Wasps* 1220–1242); the *scholia* add that he was accused of being an adulterer, as well as a *kolax* and an embezzler.

(4) *Simon* the embezzler and perjuror (*PA* 12686, *Clouds* 351, 399, Eup. 235 KA, and perhaps the *grammateus* of 424/3 BCE (*IG* I^3 227), Storey 2003, 226), probably fits here, as he is associated in the *Clouds* with Cleonymus and Theorus, and is probably another of Cleon's *kolakes*, and an allegedly crooked politician; in which case the cavalryman and author Simon (*PA* 12687/9) is unlikely to be the same man

(5) A very similar sykophant and *kolax* is *Phanus* (*PA* 14078), represented as a *hupographeus*, i.e. a sykophant whom Cleon gets to prepare his

prosecutions and bring them for him (*Eq.* 1256), and who then appears as a guest at Cleon's *sumposion* (*Wasps* 1220).

(6) *Aeschines* (*PA* 337, *PAA* 113380) also appears, presumably as a *kolax*, at Cleon's *sumposion* in *Wasps* 1220; like others, he is given a false patronymic—'Sellartius' or son of 'Sellus'—implying being a boasting *alazôn* (*Wasps* 1243, perhaps 325) and he is labeled as 'smoke' at *Birds* 823.[55] Such are the characteristic designations of those (of whom more will follow) who are seen as lying spongers, lacking the wealth they pretentiously claim.

(7) *Prepis* (*PA* 12184) appears at *Ach.* 842–844, associated with Cleonymus and Hyperbolus, as one to be avoided in the agora for his *euruprôktia*; probably (in view of the name's rarity) he is the same as the secretary of the *Boulê* in 422/1 BCE (*IG* I^3 79.1). He may well be another associated with Cleon.[56]

(8) *Amynias* son of Pronapes (*PA* 737, *PAA* 124575) is another character with a significant political career and apparently a full set of allegations (and only a slight hint of a link to Cleon, and perhaps of varied political opinions).[57] In Cratinus 227 KA (*Seriphioi*—perhaps early in the 420s), according to a *scholion* on *Wasps* 74, he was represented as a *kolax*, *alazôn*, and sykophant; that play seems to have targeted especially spongers and some 'new-rich-villains' (*neoploutoponêroi*: a *hapax*, presumably a coinage for this play), as examples of what is ruining Athens.[58] He appears also as an effeminate draft-dodger (*Clouds* 685–691), an inveterate dicer (*Wasps* 74), and like Aeschines a pretentious long hair (*Wasps* 466),[59] and (again) a son of Sellus, i.e. a poor *alazôn* (*Wasps* 1267). His political career as a general and ambassador is mocked in *Wasps* 1265–1274, where he appears to have lost his wealth, and is forced to

[55] See also Hesych. *s.v. Sesellisai*; MacDowell on *Wasps* 325, Dunbar on *Birds* 823, and Storey 1985, 321–322.

[56] Cf. Olsen *ad loc.*

[57] Amynias is how the MSS consistently spell him, though he is the only classical Athenian of that name. Dover's suggestion (on *Clouds* 31) to change them all to the common name Ameinias is probably unnecessary, and has not been adopted by later editors and prosopographers.

[58] Cf. Ruffell 2000, 492–493.

[59] This joke suggests that Amynias at least adopted a pretentious hair-style (as did the fourth-century politician Hegesippus Crobylus), and perhaps was felt to espouse oligarchic or laconizing views.

dine on fruit instead of posh meals with Andocides' father Leogoras (as a sponger?), is as poor as Antiphon,[60] and finds his mates among the 'Penestai' in Thessaly, whereas in Eupolis' *Poleis* he is like a farmer in the perfume shop (222 KA).[61]

(9) *Cleisthenes* was for two decades a comic target both for sykophancy and 'passive' sexuality. His supposed patronymic 'son of Sibortius' (*Ach.* 117–122) is likely to be a snide suggestion of a homosexual (rather than familial) relationship with Sibortius the *palaistra* owner mentioned in Plut. *Alc.* 3 (quoting Antiphon, fr. 66). His status as the genre's favorite effeminate and 'friend of women' may conceivably have rested on little more than his inability to grow a beard (Dover on *Clouds* 355); see also: *Eq.* 1374, *Birds* 831, *Th.* 235, 574–929, *Lys.* 622, 1092, *Frogs* 422, Pherecr. fr. 143 KA, Crat. 208 KA (where he is also a gambler). There are hints of a long-lasting, if minor, career: *Wasps* 1187 implies he served on an official *theôria*, and *Frogs* 48, 57 suggests he was a trierarch (or other naval officer?) on a recent campaign; and he is quite likely to be the Cleisthenes stigmatized in *Lys.* 25.25–26 as one of the three most destructive 'democratic' prosecutors harrying those involved in the oligarchic regimes of 411/10 BCE.[62]

(10) A comparable sponger, *Lysistratus* of Cholargus (*PA* 9630), is consistently presented in Aristophanes as a well-known, but relatively poor and 'hungry' *kolax* and jokester: his first appearance is at Ar. *Daitaleis* fr. 205.2 KA, where he appears with Alcibiades and Thrasymachus, all three as sophist-influenced orators and word-coiners; at *Ach.* 854 he, like the painter Pauson, is an offensive jester one wished to avoid in the agora (and cf. *Eq.* 1267), and in *Wasps* he is both a practical and a verbal joker: at 787–789 when a juror he cheated Philocleon of his three obols pay by palming mullet-scales on him instead, while at Philoctemon's

[60] This Antiphon, a 'poor' sponger and guest at the *sumposion* at *Wasps* 1299, is probably the same as the speechwriter and later oligarch, in which case he is viewed as another flatterer and sykophant: cf. Plato's *Peisandrus* fr. 110 KA (greed). But he may be, as Storey 1985, 321–322 prefers, the son of Lysonides (*PA* 1283), a politician, possibly the one mentioned by Cratinus in the *Pytine* as 'not a bad man' (Plut. *Mor.* 833B).

[61] See MacDowell *ad loc.*, Murphy 1992, 546, Storey 2003, 225–226.

[62] If so, perhaps these political activities increased Aristophanes' desire to continue the stock jokes against his deficiencies in masculinity and appropriateness for public office. Straton (*PA* 129634) is associated with Cleisthenes as an effeminate and likely *kolax* at *Ach.*117–122; also *Eq.* 1374, and *Holkades* fr. 422 KA; his career then seems to peter out.

party in *Wasps* (1299–1325) as a *kolax* he shares the responsibility for jokes and games with the more dedicated comic *bômolokhos*, Thuphrastus. Whether he should be identified with any of his homonyms in the period who appear in political or forensic contexts is uncertain, but he is likely to have had some role in public life.[63]

(11) *Chaerephon*, probably of Sphettus (*PA* 15203) is one of the many who appeared in the individual play with perhaps the largest collection of spongers, Eupolis' *Kolakes* (421 BCE), and he is also attested as a sykophant and a minor politician. It seems likely that the *Kolakes* focused especially on Callias' extravagant folly in supporting a wide range of flatterers, including many sophists like Protagoras and the chorus representing the stereotypical social life and anti-morality of the 'professional', food-mad *kolax*.[64] Chaerephon was perhaps best known as Socrates' close associate, but is attested by Arethas' scholion on the *Apology* as one of Callias' *kolakes* in the play (180 KA);[65] he evidently involved himself in politics, as a democrat who shared in the exile during the Thirty (*Clouds* 104 etc., Pl. *Ap*. 20e, etc.).[66] Arethas' scholion on the *Apology* passage reports seven citations from comedy, which represent him also as pallid and ghostly (Ar. *Birds* 1296, 1564, *Horai*, 584 KA) and Eup. *Poleis* (253 KA); as haggard and poor (Crat. *Pytine*, fr. 215 KA), and as a sykophant in Ar. *Telmesseis* (552 KA) and a thief in his *Dramata* 295 KA).[67]

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[63] A *scholion* on *Wasps* 787 mentions a Lysistratus son of Macareus as a *kinaidos*, who seems to be from the deme Amphitrope, not Cholargus (another Lysistratus son of Macareus, probably his grandson, of Amphitrope, appears at *IG* II^2 2645), and he is probably the butt of the anal joke at *Lys.* 1105. I find this more plausible than Storey's 1985, 324–326 treatment of the Lysistratus in the *Wasps* as a laconizer, cf. Fisher 2000, 376.

[64] See Carey 2000, 423–425, Fisher 2000, 42, Tylawsky 2002, 43–57, and Storey 2003, 179–197, 81–94.

[65] Arethas states explicitly that Chaerephon was presented as Callias' *kolax*, but this may rest on no more than the suspicion that he regularly attended Callias' parties along with Socrates.

[66] On his role in *Clouds*, and the possibility that he may have had a speaking role in the first version, see Dover's edition xxxiii, xcv–xcvi. Dover also suggests (on 104) that the deme designation may be a joke rather than his actual deme.

[67] Tylawsky attempts (2002, 67–73) to make the 'Chaerephon' (real name or nickname?) constantly mocked in fourth-century comedy (see Athen. 242e–244a) merely the undying stock parasite ultimately based on Socrates' friend. This perhaps dismisses too easily Chaerephon's connections with many other figures of the period, and his alleged authorship of a food book dedicated to 'Cyrebion' which was catalogued by Callimachus (Athen. 244a).

(12) *Autolycus*, mentioned above as Callias' boyfriend, had a central role in Eupolis' play of the following year, named after him, in which the beautiful pancratiast, his lover Callias, his father Lycon, and his father's wife or mistress Rhodia—or the Rhodian woman—all featured. Eupolis cared enough for this play to produce a revised version (Storey 2003, 82–84). In Xenophon's *Symposium*, Callias and his approved boyfriend appear with his father as a decorous and respectable pair at an extravagant party to celebrate the victory (though there are hints that Lycon was considerably less rich than Callias, and that the lover was sponsoring his career lavishly).[68] Comedies naturally give a more hostile and cruder picture. Cratinus (*Pytine*, fr. 214 KA) apparently represented Lycon as a poor man and an effeminate, and the *Autolycus* presumably showed him as the *kolax* of Callias, and a foreigner, his son as an easily penetrated youth (*eutrêsios*), and his wife (or mistress) apparently promiscuous.[69] It is certainly unusual for a young, active and successful athlete (and one who was presented with statues) to be presented explicitly as *euruprôktos* at this stage (Sommerstein 1996, 331); the poets seem in fact to be careful with the gymnastic beauties when they were still young, *before* they had started other public activities. But the prominence of Callias and Lycon perhaps encouraged Eupolis to make an exception of Autolycus. Lycon was described as a *dêmagogos* (Hermippus of Smyrna, *apud* D.L. 2.38), and in my view probably is identical with the prosecutor of Socrates, the 'defender of orators';[70] a further argument is that the killing of Autolycus on the orders of the Thirty, to gratify the Spartan commander Callibius (Plut. *Lys.* 15.5), might have helped persuade the father to forget any previous social association with Socrates and join the prosecution against Critias' supposed mentor.

(13) *Archedemus*, of Peleces (*PA* 2326), already discussed in detail above, is a paradigmatic case of a *kolax* and sykophant who built a successful career as a democratic politician. In addition, the representation of his shared debauchery with the younger Alcibiades (Lys. 14.25) treats them as sexually polymorphous like the elder Alcibiades.

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[68] It seems highly unlikely (as argued by Ludwig 2002, 229–230) that readers would suppose that the relationship had no physical expression, or that Lycon at least was deceived into thinking so. See Fisher 2006a, 233.

[69] Eupolis fr. 61 (in Σ Pl. *Ap.* 23e); on Rhodia, *Lys.* 270–271 and Σ *ad loc.*, Storey 2003, 84–92, who has some attractive suggestions about the plot.

[70] Fisher 1998, 99, 2000, 388–389; though this view is not shared by Storey 1985, 322–323, 2003, 93.

(14) A '*son of Chaereas*' (unfortunately unidentifiable) appears as an effeminate and corrupt *katapugôn sunêgoros* at *Wasps* 686–691.[71] Neither the Chaereas who was apparently mentioned as a *xenos* in Eupolis' *Baptai* (fr. 90 KA), nor the general of 411/10 BCE (Th. 8.74) need be related.

(15) It is unfortunately impossible to identify securely the politician who was the subject of the *epirrhêma* surviving in some fragmentary and deeply obscure lines from Eupolis *Dêmoi* (fr. 99.22–34): he claims to be a worthy speaker, but has non-Athenian origins, seems to hang around with 'unpolitical male whores' (*apragmones pornoi*), 'creeps around (or into) generalships' and does something with comedy or comic poets; and violently attacks the generals in debates over a campaign at Mantineia. Plausible candidates[72] include major 'demagogues' such as Hyperbolus, Cleophon (or his brother Philinus), or various lesser figures (e.g. Archedemus). The phrase *apragmones pornoi* is intriguing, but obscure: does it mean poor rent boys who do not intend to move into politics, or dissolute youths from more elite families who equally avoid such engagements?

Finally, the leading politicians (above all *Cleon*),[73] naturally, are represented as *kolakes* of the collective *dêmos*, not of other politicians, and may often be seen as larger-scale manipulators of the judicial system rather than as mere sykophants. But hints of a combination of sexual deviancy and misdemeanors in the courts at the starts of their careers can be discovered for some of them. *Alcibiades* (coming of course from a higher social background than most) is satirized as a rhetorical innovator and a sexual passive in *Daitaleis* (frr. 205, 244 KA), and as both *euruprôktos* and a glib and deceitful *sunêgoros* at *Ach.* 716; a lisper at *Wasps* 76, and an effeminate womanizer at Pherecr. fr. 164 KA, and the seducer of Agis' wife at *com. adesp.* fr. 123 KA.[74]

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[71] On the collusive tactics between prosecution and defense so that the prosecutor 'throws' the case, see Rubinstein 2000, 209–210.

[72] Canvassed in detail by Storey 2003, 149–156.

[73] About whom one may note that he is *lakatapugôn* at *Ach.* 664, is repeatedly accused of quasi-sykophantic behavior (and with some fig-puns) in the *Knights*; and after his death is explicitly called a sykophant (*Peace* 653), and a legal defender of metics and the poor (*Frogs* 569).

[74] Cf. Olsen *ad loc.*, Gribble 1999, 69–80, Wohl, 2002, 1234–1270; Sommerstein on *Frogs* 1422 and Sommerstein 1996a, 335, claims (exaggeratedly) that Alcibiades was let off significantly lightly, as an aristocrat; and Storey 2003, 1–43, 194 n. 29, 341 (quoting Sommerstein, not quite accurately) suggests that he was satirized in

Hyperbolus keeps company with Cleonymus and Prepis as effeminate sykophants at *Ach.* 842–847, and is represented as the upstart lamp-maker at *Eq.* 1302–1304 and Cratinus 209 KA, and as the (too) youthful rhetor at Cratinus 283 KA. How far he was represented as a *euruprôktos* has been debated. Hesychius (μ 285) explains 'Marikas' both as *kinaidos* and as a foreign nickname for a male slave, and Cassio 1985 and Storey 2003, 198–199 accept both meanings; Morgan 1986 argued that homosexual deviance was not part of his picture, and emended to *kinados*, 'rascal' (a racier term for *ponêros*), invoking the Persian *marika* allegedly meaning both servant and rogue (cf. English 'knave'). There is just enough evidence to support the idea (probable in itself) that jokes implying sexual deviance would be applied to Hyperbolus (and more if the unnamed character in Eupolis fr. 99.22–34 KA were he); and as Storey suggests both senses may have been drawn out, as they may well be present in Andocides' use of *kinados* at 1.99–100 (cf. MacDowell and Edwards *ad loc.*).[75]

As far as we can determine, of course, all these specific allegations may be based on no more than highly malicious gossip or the comic poets' own invention; but it suggests that the later-fifth-century audience came to the theater in the expectation that—in the mood of cynicism and hostility towards politicians presupposed by the tradition of comedy[76]—they would find amusing and not implausible repeated jokes that many or all of the most conspicuous younger politicians from 'new' families had been promiscuous boyfriends, and were now developing their careers by unscrupulously sucking up to the more established politicians, and persecuting—in teams—richer, often quieter, Athenians in and out of the courts.[77] What we have here then are stereotyped

comedy primarily for his personal characteristics and lifestyle, not his politics, but that distinction has little or no value, above all in relation to Alcibiades (cf. Th. 6.15, as Storey does note 2003, 111) This chapter (like many other recent accounts, e.g. Wohl 2002) is built on the argument that Athenians saw all these ways of being 'bad' as interconnected and all equally 'political'. Aristophanes may have left Alcibiades alone between *Wasps* and *Frogs* (where he is both significant and deeply ambivalent), but after all we have no plays surviving from the years when he was most active in Athens. Eupolis seems to have treated him harshly in the *Baptai*. The younger Alcibiades allegedly repeated his father's vices (Lys. 14.25–26, Archippus 48 KA). Such connections can of course be discovered in attacks on fourth-century politicians, such as Epichares, Androtion, Stephanus, Timarchus, and Demosthenes, cf. Christ 1989, 95–96.

[75] Wallace 1998, 72 seems (an emendation? or a slip?) to read *kinaidos* in this text.

[76] On this, Carey 1994 seems to me especially well balanced and perceptive.

[77] Carey 1994, 72 noted that the prevalence of accusations of passive homosexuality,

imaginary career patterns, applied with particular force to this category of young new arrivals on the political scene. This is not of course to say that these allegations were consistently believed, or that non-elite members of the amused audience consistently thought that these were moral boundaries of the greatest importance, which they themselves would never cross: Athenians could no doubt be as contradictory and full of bad faith as anyone else. But the point is that they felt on the whole that the values and standards against which the jokes made sense were their values.

3. *Cleisthenes' reforms on democratic participation*

3.1. *Festivals, contests and feasts*

A major part of the explanation surely starts with the multiple new opportunities produced for organized civic activities for Athenians by the systems instigated by Cleisthenes' reforms and developed by his successors down to ca. 440 BCE. Two areas stand out. First, steadily increasing levels of participation were needed for the Athenian athletic, musical, dramatic, and other competitions, many of which were new creations, liturgically funded and based on Cleisthenes' new tribal structures. The major city festivals needed by the mid-fifth century at least 1,100 citizens annually to sing and dance in dithyrambic and dramatic choruses, and nearly as many boys; team athletic contests, especially the tribal torch races, military dancing (*purrhikhai*) and other gymnastic events demanded many hundreds of contestants, men, youths and boys. In addition there were many events at local sanctuaries, deme festivals and song-dance choruses sent on *theôriai* beyond Attica's borders. Robin Osborne (1993) argued that this striking increase in competitions, many demanding tribal teams and offering more than just first prizes, met the political and social aims and needs of the wider numbers of the community rather than merely those of the liturgical elites. I argued (1998a) that the very considerable numbers of competitors which were required in the differentiated contests of boys, ephebes, and adult men (hard to quantify precisely, but probably running into thou-

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if based on anything, might be related to the informal patronage by which minor politicians belonged to a coterie in support of larger figures and did jobs for them, but he then took his analysis in a different direction.

sands for each group each year) must have been well beyond the capacity of the rich, the liturgical class; and that this involvement created opportunities for the growth of friendly relationships, including sexual bonds, which will have encouraged social mobility. The case may have been slightly overstated, and there have been varied views since. Peter Wilson's invaluable book on the *Khoregia* (2000) vacillated,[78] though his more recent work (2003), favors a somewhat more inclusive view, as do many contributors to the important collection on *Music and the Muses*.[79] But David Pritchard has argued powerfully that most Athenians with the training and expertise to compete in these musical and athletic events would have belonged to the elite (2003, 2004).[80] First, he argues that demographically there would have been enough boys, youths, and adults in the elite class available each year to provide almost all of the numbers, and that only the wealthy elite would have the time for the necessary education and training. One may respond though that his numbers of those needed for the musical and athletic contests underestimate the total numbers of contestants needed for all the events; he needs to assume that most available elite boys and men would compete in pretty well all events throughout every year. Yet not all boys would have sufficient aptitude for both musical and athletic events, and more would find it difficult to find time for all the events every year. Similarly, skilled young adults would have many other political, military, economic or social commitments which would prevent them from competing every year. Secondly, Pritchard suggests that most middling and poorer Athenians would want their children to learn their letters and some music, but would lack the ambition or confidence to be willing to spend their limited resources on choral singing and dancing or athletics, and would view such activities negatively as largely upper class (though he does think they chose to imitate as best they could sympotic styles of drinking and eating). I shall return to the general presumptions involved here below, but his case in my view greatly underestimates the

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[78] He first (2000, 75) suggests *khoreutai* come from a 'not dissimilar social and economic background' to liturgists, but later (2000, 123–129) rather that they are 'likely to have been of lower economic standing'.

[79] See Ceccarelli 2004, 91 and Kowalzig 2004, 39–40, and most recently Revermann 2006, 107–112, who suggests that dramatic choruses may have been more exclusive than dithyrambic ones, at least till ca. 420 BCE.

[80] I hope to make this case in more detail elsewhere, and am grateful to David Pritchard for continuing fruitful discussions of our areas of disagreement.

extent to which many Athenians (and many other Greeks) saw choral singing and dancing as part of their shared culture and central to all education.[81]

Many texts do in fact assume that dithyrambic and dramatic *khoreutai*, pyrrhic dancers, torch racers and the like tended to be from a lower wealth level from 'the rich', i.e. those liable to perform liturgies. They suggest active involvement of many at least of the next formal category of citizens, those registered as hoplites, and conceivably some less well off citizens as well.[82] The Old Oligarch's comments on participation and attitudes in choral singing, running, and serving in the ships may be highly exaggerated and in part contradictory, but they rest on a fundamental assumption that there is a social difference between liturgists and at least a good many of those who form the choruses and athletic teams as well as the naval crews (1.13–14). Many passages in Xenophon present a remarkably positive picture of the power of Athenian choruses to create or exhibit social cohesion. Most striking is the appeal by Cleocritus the Eleusinian herald to the combatants on both sides in the fighting in the Piraeus during the civil war that ended the regime of the Thirty. He recalls the unifying effects of shared long experience together as fighters, and in the festivals as fellow chorusmen (*sunkhoreutai*), and as schoolmates/trainee chorus-lads (*sumphoitêtai*) (X. *HG* 2.4.20–21);[83] on many other occasions Xenophon goes out of his way to praise the cohesion and discipline of Athenian choruses.[84] Antiphon's client organizing his liturgy sought the help of experienced men in the two tribes concerned to recruit skilled boy choristers for the dithyramb (6.12–14). Poorer Athenians apparently with no little singing experience include the chorus of jurors in *Wasps* who claim to have

[81] Comparison with other societies support the theoretical possibility that large-scale choral singing and dancing can engage the mass participation and intense loyalties of non-elites: e.g. male-voice choirs in the industrial towns of nineteenth-century Wales (cf. Williams 1998).

[82] On the tricky problems of defining Athenian hoplites (those in the catalogue, and volunteers) and relating them to the Solonian class of *zeugitai*, see recently van Wees 2006 and Raaflaub 2006.

[83] Cf. also Wilson 2003, 183–184.

[84] X. *Mem.* 3.3.11–13, 3.4.4–5, 3.5.6, *Oec.* 8.3–5. Xenophon in these passages is emphasizing the collective discipline and cohesion, driven by *philotimia*, of Athens' choruses on a *theôria* to Delos; their *euandria* beats that of any other state (3.3.11–13). He describes how the *philonikia* of the *khorêgos* Antisthenes got results because he paid for the best trainers (3.4.4–5), or similarly (3.5.6), how both the crews of Athenian triremes and their choruses pay very close and silent attention to their orders in contrast to the land army.

been 'brave in choruses and in battles' in their youth (1060–1061) and the Athenian captives in Sicily who were spared because of their ability to teach and to recite Euripidean verses and choral odes (Plu. *Nic.* 29.2–3).[85]

Serious athletics, leading to individual entries at the big games, may have remained predominantly an elite activity;[86] but the tribal competitions in the torch races and other team events must have involved wider participation and some training. There are signs in Aristophanes of concern expressed at fat and unfit competitors (*Frogs* 1087–1088, fr. 459 KA), and in the mid-fourth century Xenophon's advice (X. *Vect.* 4.51–52), that payment for those required to do gymnastic training would make them more effective than their current training for the torch races, coupled with *IG* II[2] 1250, an inscription honoring a torch-race team, indicate that at least from that time the tribal torch races at three or more festivals (possibly involving about 400 youths each time) were seen as an important part of the quasi-military training for the (proto)-ephebes, youths of ca. 18–19, and therefore must surely have been intended at least for all sons of registered hoplites.[87] On balance, then, it seems that the expansion of the festival contests must have produced much wider participation, and hence it is more than likely that many team-members will have come into sustained, largely cooperative contact with richer and more powerful citizens. This may have attracted them to aspects of the gymnastic and sympotic activities and culture, including homoerotic experiences.

One of the liturgies, the tribal *hestiasis*, involved feasting large numbers of tribal participants at certain major festivals;[88] and at least some of the teams of magistrates appear to have taken their meals together in sympotic style. The evidence of a rubbish dump of material deriving from the archons' dining room from ca. 460–450 BCE reveals exchanges of graffiti on their cups on which desirable youths may be

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[85] Cf. also Meidias' reported slur that the Assembly vote against him was passed by military slackers, deserting the frontier forts, *khoreutai* (presumably also those who had used chorus duty to avoid army service), *xenoi*, and the like (D. 21.193), which is an implausible insult to throw if *khoreutai* were thought to be mostly upper class, and rather in line with Demosthenes' presentation of Meidias as one who constantly slandered the ordinary Athenian ecclesiast and juror.

[86] Cf. the recent balanced statements for athletes in Athens in Golden 1998, 169–175, and Kyle 2006, 150–179.

[87] See Sekunda 1990.

[88] Davies 1967, Schmitt-Pantel 1992.

lovely (*kaloi*) or 'up the arses' (*katapugones*).[89] I have argued (Fisher 2000) that aspects of the full-scale sympotic experience (such as reclining, garlands, mixed wine and water with mixing bowl and cups, fish-eating, activities such as songs, competitive conversations or hired entertainers) became increasingly available to wider groups—for example at festival feasts and meals provided by *khorêgoi* for their *khoreutai*, at the dinners of unofficial cult associations, at some of the magistrates' meals, and at private *sumposia*, even as the richer elites may have devised more extravagant or refined ways of marking out their distinctiveness. This view too seems to be winning ground from various literary and archaeological perspectives,[90] and it seems to me that the cases for gradual widening of access here and those for wider participation in choral and athletic contests are mutually supportive. If so, adherence to the protocols of reciprocity and masculinity at feasts and *sumposia*, and the moral need not to be tempted to gain access to them through shameful *kolakeia*, will have seemed a more relevant concern to wider numbers of citizens.

3.2. *Politics and administration*

The development of the democracy and the empire needed progressively larger numbers of officials, members of boards and committees, and those involved in litigation. Hansen argues convincingly, on the basis of the number of boards and posts so far attested, and the fact that new epigraphic finds regularly reveal the existence of hitherto unknown boards, that the figures in the Aristotelian *Constitution of Athens* (24.3) of 700 *polis* magistrates at home and another large number overseas[91] (in addition of course to the 500 *bouleutai* and 6,000 jurors), are far from implausible estimates for the second half of the fifth century; to which one could add a good number of deme and other minor posts.[92] It seems clear, then, that well over a thousand citizens had to be found annually to fulfill important and time-consuming functions, many of

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[89] See Rotroff and Oakley 1992, and Steiner 2002, who suggests that the archons in this transitional period of the Ephialtic/Periclean reforms are adhering to their traditional elite practices, but it may be that these traditions continued as the composition of archons became more socially diverse after the reforms of 457 BCE.

[90] See e.g. Wilkins 2000, 202–256, Pritchard 2002, Lynch 2007.

[91] The second 700 in the MSS is probably corrupt: see e.g. Rhodes *ad loc.*

[92] Hansen 1980, and 1991, 239–240, Wallace 2005. Convenient lists of officials in the military, financial, administrative, commercial, religious and other spheres can be found in Develin 1989, 1–2.

which were remunerated, at least in the fifth century.[93] Citizens had to be over thirty for most or all of these posts,[94] could only serve twice on the *boulê*, and hold the other civilian offices only once (Arist. *Ath.* 62.3), though one could of course hold any number of different posts during one's lifetime (but not two in successive years).[95] These requirements presupposed and demanded a remarkable increase in the numbers of Athenians willing to hold offices, and thereby to acquire, normally as part of a team, political and administrative skills, much practical experience of dealing with state business, and no little honor and power—for example, all magistrates had powers to attempt to resolve disputes, and to fine offenders, up to a limit of (probably) 50 drachmae.[96]

As adumbrated already, and as properly emphasized by Rubinstein 2000, teamwork in litigation was extremely widespread in the law courts, as groups of prosecutors operated together and defendants brought in their supporters as fellow-speakers or witnesses, in both cases to share the labors and risks. This practice will have considerably expanded the numbers of those we should suppose engaged in speaking in the courts, and casts doubt on the view that frequent forensic activity was restricted to a 'narrow elite' of *rhêtores* or *politeuomenoi*.[97] It offered initial opportunities for ambitious young men keen to start a political career by successful forensic pleading, by joining a more experienced litigant or team.[98] The nerves and the pleasure of a beginner are neatly mocked by Paphlagon, likening the Sausage-Seller to an insignificant man who made a good speech against a metic, after rehearsing all night, talking aloud in the streets, drinking water, showing it off and boring his friends, and thought he was an excellent speaker (*Eq.* 346–350); this also suggests a wide range of relatively less-serious denunciations, lawsuits and small claims disputes, e.g., at the markets at which the inexperienced speakers may have got started. Even the 'professional sykophant' of *Wealth* decides, when planning his revenge on the god

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[93] While competition for places is attested, epigraphic evidence suggests boards at times failed to recruit their quotas of one representative per tribe: Hansen 1991, 232–233. On pay, cf. Hansen 1979, Gabrielsen 1981, Hansen 1991, 242–244, Rhodes on Arist. *Ath.* 62.2.

[94] Cf. Hansen 1980, 167–169 (all), Develin 1985 (most).

[95] Hansen 1991, 232–233.

[96] Cf. Hansen 1991, 190. The powers granted to various relatively minor magistrates, and the pleasure many ordinary Athenians seem to have derived from them (on which see also D. 24.112), are well explored by Wallace 2005, and also Migeotte 2005.

[97] See Rubinstein 2000, esp. 111, 191–193.

[98] Rhodes 1986, 142–143.

Wealth and his defenders, to recruit a 'fellow-yokesman', even if one made of fig-wood, i.e. a second, junior 'sykophant', to help him with his *eisangelia* for subverting the democracy.[99] Thus here too an expanding pool of ambitious newcomers evidently emerged, and gathered the necessary skills in public speaking by imitation and observation, or by what access they could get to the new education. All this provides, I suggest, an essential part of the overall context in which we may view the linked allegations of shameful and unreciprocal conduct we have been considering.

As mentioned above, Pritchard's arguments against widespread civic participation rest in part on a picture of the majority of middling or poorer Athenians as largely lacking the ambition to join the conspicuous elites, in the competitions for honor, wealth, and its luxuries in political and social life, and fearing the possibly adverse consequences in joining the liturgical class. No doubt there were many who did prefer not to risk their properties, careers, or even lives, the 'quiet Athenians' studied by Carter 1986; but as he showed, texts reveal such liturgy or office avoiders as much among the already wealthy families as among the peasant farmers. The picture seems unconvincing; the plentiful evidence of very considerable economic and political mobility, in both directions, supports the more natural assumption that *philotimia* and *pleonexia* were to be found among many middling Athenians, who were only too keen to gain access to the sources of power, prestige, and more luxurious lifestyles.

Such a perspective on the ordinary Athenian as diffident and inactive may have a relation to the more theoretical assertions of the dominance of 'aristocratic' or 'elite' values and ideology in the negotiations between elites and masses. It might be held that if members of the non-elite citizenry did buy into criticism of newcomers to the political scene on the 'moralizing' grounds of breaches of reciprocity, this is a matter of false consciousness, whereby the hegemonic values of the elites (see for example Wohl 2002, Kurke 1999) have successfully imposed the expectation among the masses that the *nouveaux riches* from their number were more likely to yield to the temptations to get on and make money by these slavish and shameful means; and that comedy colludes with these biased assumptions in part by tradition and in

[99] So rightly Rubinstein 2000, 104, 192; preferable to Sommerstein *ad loc.*, who sees the second man only as a witness.

part because many of the comic poets shared these snobbish attitudes. I would accept some of this; but I would also argue that the values appealed to by these critiques of the new men, were values held by all free members of Greek communities, for good reasons, and were not simply imposed from above: they were values of reciprocity, friendship, and fairness relevant at all levels of social life, in practice of course negotiated by individuals with varying degrees of decency and justice, or hypocrisy and double dealing. I would also argue that while few if any individual allegations can be nailed, there is little reason to suppose that all the new politicians were incorruptible, even while we may feel some upper-class politicians got off lightly in comedy. In practice, attitudes of ordinary Athenians to the new politicians were probably as ambivalent and contradictory as they were on many other issues (or as they are in modern democracies), but they were content to share in the theater a cynical assumption that most of those at or approaching the top would break the rules if they thought they could get away with it.

4. *Legislative and social responses*

There is good evidence, then, that a majority of Assembly-going Athenians became increasingly aware that their well-established democratic practices had led to an explosion of participation in politics, the courts, and the festivals, and—at least from the start of the Archidamian War—politicians from new families, many educated in advanced rhetorical skills, were operating as the leading politicians, and engaged in ceaseless and often ruthless mutual competition. These developments are likely to have produced ambivalent or contradictory responses among non-elite Athenians. Many in principle no doubt welcomed such egalitarian spread and sought, or hoped, to take advantage of these opportunities, in politics, community contests, and social life; but many also felt anxiety that a worrying number of these *arrivistes* into the worlds of politics and social life might have broken or be breaking the norms of reciprocity. As *ponêroi* such people constituted a danger to their shared community values. These fears were of course fostered and exacerbated by criticisms which articulated—whether from conviction or convenience—the snobbish and envious social prejudices found in more traditional elite families. In this final section I shall seek to demonstrate that this combination of intense interest in celebrity behavior and the moral anxiety it occasioned was appealed to in the comedy

of abuse of the new political classes and itself produced a sequence of new regulating legislation.

The most powerful indication of this is the *agôn* in *Clouds*. Since Dover's edition it is agreed that the 'Better Logic', the defender of traditional education, offers in place of rational argument an incoherent and contradictory rant: he believes that Athenian youth should as in the past spend their time learning to sing dithyrambic songs and training at the *gumnasia*, behaving with discipline and *sôphrosunê*, not flirting or pimping themselves to their lovers, but combines this with an obsession with sex and a disturbing penchant for nostalgic drooling over boys' thighs, their whipped buttocks and dewy secretions on their genitals.[100] By contrast the Worse Logic is cool and in control, and encourages his acolytes to avoid physical training and traditional songs, and indulge their appetites for hot baths, radical philosophical arguments, boys, women, drinking games, fish, drink and laughs. The conclusion is that all newly successful young men (and indeed the audience) are the products of the training promulgated by Worse Logic and delivered by sophists like 'Socrates'. This idea is expressed by labeling them wide-arsed, *euruprôktoi*, by a form of conventional shorthand according to which being trained to become successful forensic speakers, politicians, and tragic poets involves not only learning the new skills but also being encouraged along the way to engage in two fashionable practices, buggery with their male lovers and adultery with the wives of citizens, which carries the risk of the 'radish' treatment when caught. Hence both of these activities produces 'wide-arses'.[101]

[100] A parallel readily suggests itself with evangelical leaders from the Christian Right who are brought down by scandals with prostitutes.

[101] See especially Dover *ad loc.*, and Rademaker 2003, 116–119. Rademaker saw Better Logic as the product of the contradictory 'advice' given by the norms to the lover and the boyfriend, and the probably large divergence between ideology and practice; Dover also proposed the idea (not taken up much since) that the representation of Better Logic as a hypocritical old pederast reflected a shift away from the public acceptability of open discussion of homosexual love between the first half of the fifth century (as seen in explicit vase-painting, Pindar and Aeschylus) to the second half, when explicit discussions were restricted to comedy. To this one can add that the public reticence evident in philosophical and forensic discourse may itself be in part the result of the extension of these practices beyond a relatively closed and coherent elite. For the assumption that one might see in the city very many effeminate and depilated *kinaidoi* with their characteristic styles of walking, holding their necks at an oblique angle, cf. also fr. 137 KA (*Adespota*): τὸ δ' ὅλον οὐκ ἐπίσταμαι / ἐγὼ ψιθυρίζειν οὐδὲ κατακεκλασμένως / πλάγιον ποιήσας τὸν τράχηλον περιπατεῖν, / ὥσπερ ἑτέρους ὁρῶ κιναίδους ἐνθάδε / πολλοὺς ἐν ἄστει καὶ πεπιττοκοπημένους.

Behind the exaggerations and simplifications, there is the perception of the process whereby increasing numbers of young men were joining the political and social elites by adding education in rhetoric and radical ideas to the traditional cultural and athletic skills.[102] And there was a general suspicion that they achieved advances by exploiting shameful relationships—sexual, social, and political—with older more experienced politicians. The *Clouds agôn* and its finale is of course an extended elaboration of the constantly repeated comic joke (in Eupolis and both Platos, comic and philosopher, as well as in Aristophanes) that 'all' the real men and the future leaders come from these ranks of the shameless boyfriends, *euruprôktoi*, or *katapugones*, who flaunt their mincing walks, long hair, flowing ankle-length clothes and perfumes, who have risen to become rhetors, *sunêgoroi*, sykophants, and even generals, using their associations with the demagogues, whom they flatter.[103] Another particularly strong and explicit passage is from Eupolis' *Dêmoi* (fr. 104 KA), where the rejuvenated Miltiades and Pericles are told no longer to allow the buggered young men to rule, dragging the generalship round their ankles. The overall impression is of a dangerous swarm of young politicians (a few of whom like Alcibiades came from old political families, but more did not), with smooth-talking skills, wiggles, ankle-length clothes, heads held at an angle, and smooth and expandable bottoms, who may build successful careers in the courts and politics (and other more cultural areas) with the help of dubious relationships with older and already more successful men (again, from both new and old families).[104]

[102] Among the comic misrepresentations here is the suggestion that athletics and gymnasia were being completely neglected by the new set (found also e.g. at [Andoc.] 4.21–22); gymnasia remained the settings for most of their activities (though they may be thought to have trained less hard). Plato regularly shows bright young men at the gymnasia discussing new philosophical and political ideas, and (cf. n. 22 above) Aristophanes twice boasted of his immunity to the temptations of new fame because unlike his rival poets, he did not go cruising round the *palaistrai* picking up boys (*Wasps* 1023–1028, *Peace* 762–763; on the probable intertextuality between Aristophanes and Eupolis in these passages, see Storey 2003, 288–290).

[103] Ar. *Ach.* 77–79, 716–717, *Eq.* 423–428, 730–740, 874–880, *Clouds* 1089–1104, *Wasps* 1068–1070, *Ec.* 111–114, fr. 424 KA (*Holkades*), fr. 677 KA, Eupolis fr. 104 KA (*Dêmoi*), Pl. Com. fr. 202 KA, Pl. *Smp.* 191e–192a.

[104] The main problems I have with Rosenbloom's interesting and well-documented articles (2003, 2004) on the ostracism of Hyperbolus and the Herms and mysteries are a rather reductive classification of politicians predominantly on social grounds into *ponêroi* and *khrêstoi*, and some assumptions of solid political factions.

No play has more fun with these themes than *Knights*,[105] as Scholtz 2004 has explored in detail. The Sausage-Seller admits to having sold himself for buggery, and is proud of his flexible arse-hole (167, 427, 721, 1241); but he competes with Paphlagon as a rival *erastês* for Demos as an attractive boyfriend, as well as a *kolax*, and *sukophantês*. What is especially interesting here is the casual comparison made by the Sausage-Seller, remonstrating with Demos for behaving like current 'boy beloveds', as he rejects the *kaloi kagathoi* who want to do him good, and gives himself to the manufacturers (lamp sellers, cobblers, shoemakers and leatherworkers); to which Paphlagon responds that he does want to benefit the *dêmos*, and has done so (736–742). On the allegorical level, this does of course comment again on Demos' choice of the manufacturers as the political leaders, but it seems also to suggest that newly successful figures from such backgrounds have an aura of power and excitement and can attract the boys, just as Cleon hosts posh *sumposia* in the *Wasps*, and as Aristophanes boasts in contrast that he has not, as he well might have, used his new fame to pull the pretty boys. Dover (1978, 145) sees here a generalized hostility to *erômenoi*; but there may be a more specific point. The passage suggests a grievance among the elite and it hints perhaps more widely that the pattern of respectable pursuit of coy boys who respond warmly to presents and promises of improvement is being challenged by brash new lovers with exciting better offers. Also, as in *Clouds*, the boys are bolder and less demure. As with Criton and Archedemus and the *kolax* relationship, there are hints here of relationships across class divides which cause concern.

Somewhat later in this scene Paphlagon maintains his role as a 'good' lover by claiming credit (as will Aeschines eighty years later) for having stopped 'those boys being buggered' by his successful prosecution of Grypus; while the Sausage-Seller responds that he engaged in this 'arse-surveillance' only out of jealousy, as that was where the new *rhêtores* came from (*Eq.* 874–880). This is our first reference to legislation concerning improper homosexual activities by citizens,[106] and one of the first in a significant series of new laws and procedures which it can be argued reflect precisely the same concerns at these effects of the new social mobility, the involvement of more citizens in education, competitions, sexual relationships and politics. The laws and procedures

[105] Though Eupolis' *Marikas* or *Dêmoi* might have rivalled it.
[106] Cf. Wallace 1998, 71–72.

isolated here (see Table 1) are essentially concerned to protect the young, to protect the decorum and order at the festivals and their contests, and to exclude from prominence in public life those whose sexual, familial, economic or political behavior might shame the city.

Table 1: Athenian Laws and Regulations concerned with *kosmos* in the city and among its leading citizens.

Law/Regulation	*Texts*	*Date*
1. Age-limits for schoolteachers & regulations for schools & *gumnasia*	Aeschin. 1.10–11	5th cent.?
2. *Graphê hetairêseôs* against male prostitutes/escorts	Ar. *Eq*. 876–879, Andoc. 1.100, Aeschin. 1.20, D. 22.30–36	some time shortly before 424?
3. *Dokimasia rhêtorôn* against various shameful offenders	Aeschin. 1.28–32, Lys. 10.1	some time shortly before 424? Or towards end of 5th cent.?
4. Age limit of 40 for *khorêgoi*	Aeschin. 1.11	404/3 or later
5. Magistrates (*oinoptai*) regulating lighting & quantities of wine at feasts	Eup. fr. 219, Athen. 425a–b	(long?) before 420s
6. Regulations concerning hiring of female entertainers etc.	Arist. *Ath*. 50.2	?4th cent.
7. *Graphê sukophantias*; also *eisangelia sukophantias* and other procedures?	Arist. *Ath*. 59.3, Isocr. 15.314	420s?
8. *Probolai* against sykophants and for deceiving the people	Arist. *Ath*. 43, Isocr. 15.314, Aeschin. 2.145. Lys. 13.65, X. *HG* 1.7.34–35	Deceiving—by 406/5, Sykophants—also 406/5? Limited to 6 a year, 403/2
9. *Probolê* in relation to City Dionysia	D. 21.8–9	After ca. 415, perhaps post 403

Law/Regulation	*Texts*	*Date*
10. *Probolai* for further offenses, and also relating to other Dionysus festivals	D. 21.10–12	post 403?
11. *Probolê* in relation to Eleusinian Mysteries	D. 21.175	post 403?
12. Laws concerning *eukosmia* in the Assembly	Aeschin. 1.33–35	ca. 380?
13. Law giving each tribe in turn responsibility for order in the Assembly	Aeschin. 1.34	346/5

Aeschines' *Timarchus* is naturally the source of much of the evidence for these laws designed to protect *sôphrosunê* and civic *kosmos*. First he delineates (*no. 1*) laws regulating opening and closing hours for school and *palaistra* hours (avoiding hours of darkness), numbers and ages of pupils, the supervision of slave *paidagôgoi*, the discipline and good behavior of boys, teachers and trainers, and the proper order at the athletic and musical contests at the schools, *palaistrai*, and the dithyrambic choruses (1.7–11).[107] Precise dates for these measures are unrecoverable, and Aeschines' attribution of them all to Solon (1.7.9) is highly implausible. It seems most likely that they were introduced—perhaps successively—some time during the fifth century, as the numbers of schools, *palaistrai*, and contests involving boys and youths all increased. These regulations focus above all on the prevention of inappropriate homosexual contact between the boys and adults (teachers, trainers, slave attendants or other visitors), or between the boys themselves.[108]

In operation at least by 424 BCE (as we have just seen from *Knights*) was at least one of the two measures (*nos. 2 and 3*) designed to prevent those who had performed various shameful and unmasculine acts from becoming active citizens. First (probably) was the broader measure of the *graphê hetairêseôs*, followed by the *dokimasia rhêtorôn* which was

[107] Cf. Fisher *ad loc.*; for the comparable Hellenistic epigraphic evidence for similar regulations, see Gauthier and Hatzopoulos 1993.
[108] Cf. Σ *Aeschin.* 1.10 with Fisher *ad loc.*

the law actually used by Aeschines in his prosecution of Timarchus.[109] What these measures had in common was that in effect they were directed exclusively against 'active' citizens. The *graphê hetairêseôs* could be brought once a man who had been a prostitute or male 'escort' had put himself forward to hold a public office, a priesthood, or had spoken in the Assembly or council (Aeschin. 1.18–19);[110] the *dokimasia rhêtorôn* similarly could come into operation only when someone ineligible spoke in the Assembly, but the list of disqualifications was extended to those who had beaten or failed to support a parent, who had failed military service through cowardice, had destroyed their estate, as well as to any who had been a prostitute or an escort. For the offenses of cowardice and maltreatment of parents, specific public procedures (*graphai*) already existed, probably from Solon or at least the sixth century, but the *dokimasia* became available as a back-up form of prosecution if the alleged offender became a *rhêtôr*. The other offenses, sexual and economic, only become available for prosecution when the offender engaged in the public activity.[111] It seems then that at some point before the date of the *Knights*, perhaps during the Archidamian War or a little before, a majority at an Assembly decided to introduce a *graphê* targeted at men who had broken the norms of homosexual relations by profiting unduly in terms of money or lifestyles, who then sought to offer prominent leadership to the city. This makes perfect sense if, as I am arguing, many Athenians believed that homosexual practices were spreading among a considerably wider clientele, many of whom were also choosing to build political careers.[112] The *graphê hetairêseôs* served as a warning that while homosexual love remained an admirable practice, engaging in it for mercenary reasons was disgraceful, and rendered one unsuitable to be a politician. This law would have provided the model

[109] On these procedures see Wallace 1998, Fisher 2001, 39–53, MacDowell 2005 and Gagliardi 2005.

[110] So Winkler 1990, 59–61, Fisher 2001, 40, 50–51. Wallace 1998, 72–73 and Carey 2004, 124–125 suggest that Andoc. 1.99–101 implies that a prosecution under a *graphê hetairêseôs* would in theory be possible, following *any* exercise of civic rights (such as defending oneself in court). The laws were perhaps unclear on this point, but the more detailed elaborations in Aeschines 1 (especially 195), and the explicit statement of D. 22.30, both suggest that the laws were targeted only at those who chose a more active form of civic involvement.

[111] See especially Wallace 1998, on the form of 'potential' *atimia* thus created, and also MacDowell 2005, and Gagliardi 2005.

[112] On these ideals of masculinity built into the laws, see e.g. Fisher 1998b, Rademaker 2003, Roisman 2005.

for other actions which only operated on active citizens, based on the arguments that men who committed other seriously shameful actions, including gross extravagance on pleasures such as fine cuisine, gambling or sex, would be dangerous and shameful as leaders of the people. The *dokimasia rhêtorôn* (introduced perhaps also during the Archidamian War) offered a swifter procedure to keep the Assembly safe from contamination by those who could be demonstrated to be guilty of any such offenses against civic masculinity, some, but not all, of which might have been prosecuted already under *graphai.*

Next, Aeschines (1.11) reports a law (*no. 4*) stipulating that *khorêgoi* of boys' choruses must be at least forty, an age when they might be supposed to have acquired control over their desires.[113] This provision about *khorêgoi* was almost certainly not in place by 404/3; Lysias' client had been a boys' *khorêgos* in 404/3, when well under 30 (21.4), as had Alcibiades been earlier ([Andoc.] 4.20–23). The law was probably introduced at the time of the general revision at the restoration of democracy, and suggests that these concerns had not abated.[114]

So much for the warnings for bad boyfriends. New laws specifically dealing with flatterers and parasites do not appear in the records. One may note however that to the activities of the probably well-established officials (*oinoptai*) regulating quantities of wine at sacred feasts (*no. 5*) were added (perhaps some time in the late fifth or fourth centuries) the duties assigned to the *astunomoi* to cap the prices of hiring female musical entertainers (*no. 6*) at parties, in the interests of fair access for all, and the reduction of excessive expenditure or public disorder (Arist. *Ath.* 50.2, Hyp. 4.3, cf. Davidson 1997, 82–83, Fisher 2000, 367–368).

A complex sequence of new laws dealing with sykophancy does emerge during the period (*no. 7*).[115] How much, if at all, it was identified as a crime before our earliest evidence for the character and the offense begins, in 427, with the fragments of the *Daitaleis* (228 KA), is not known, nor is it clear how many of the procedures said to be

[113] Cf. Antiphon 6.1–13 on the care taken by a good *khorêgos* to avoid giving offense or arousing suspicion. Similar age limits were introduced in the 330s for the new officials concerned with the reformed *ephêbeia* (Arist. *Ath.* 42.2).

[114] Unless, perhaps, Lysias' client was *khorêgos* under the Thirty (which is likely) and the age-limit law had lapsed or was ignored in the confused conditions at that time (possible), *and*, second, Alcibiades got away with an irregularity (as supposed by Wilson 2000, 155), which is not commented on in any of the surviving attacks on him (less likely).

[115] In general on the laws designed to discourage ill-founded or frivolous prosecutions, see also Harris 1999.

available to take alleged sykophants to court (*graphê*,[116] *eisangelia*,[117] *phasis*,[118] *endeixis* and *apagôgê*,[119] and *probolê*)[120] were in fact available, or when they were introduced. It may be safest to suppose that the *graphê sukophantias* was introduced in the 420s or a bit later, supplementing the automatic penalties imposed on prosecutors in public trials who failed to win one-fifth of the votes or abandoned the prosecution. The *probolê* procedure, where complainants could seek a preliminary, but not determining, vote in the Assembly before moving on emboldened to a trial in a court, seems also to appear first in the years after the Sicilian expedition, in two distinct areas of concern, the great civic festivals, and the Assembly and the law courts. For the festivals, Demosthenes' speech against Meidias reveals that the procedure was first introduced for a *probolê* concerning wrongdoing at the City Dionysia, to be heard at the Assembly immediately following the festival (*no. 9*: D. 21.8); this cannot have occurred before Alcibiades' outrages ca. 415 BCE (D. 21.147). Similar regulations followed for other Dionysiac festivals and the Eleusinian mysteries (*nos. 10, 11*: D. 21.10–11, 175), perhaps shortly before or after 404/3 BCE. In advance of a law case the people wished to have the chance to express its disapproval of any behavior which caused violence or public disorder, or disrupted, by the intrusion of private disputes, the feeling that the great festivals constituted a marked separation from ordinary life and a celebration of civic and religious unity in which very large numbers of them participated. At some point in the fourth century, at or after the introduction of the *prohedroi*, further laws concerning public order and decency in the Assembly itself were introduced (*no. 12*: Aeschin. 1.33–35, 3.4, Arist. *Ath.* 44.3); they were followed in 346/5 by a law assigning responsibility to each tribe in turn for such order (*no. 13*: Aeschin. 1.33).[121]

Secondly, *probolai* were held in the Assembly (*no. 8*), first, on our evidence, against those who had deceived the people in fomenting the trial of the generals after Arginusae in 406 (X. *HG* 1.7.35), and the

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116 Lys. 13.65; Isocr. 15.314–315.

117 Isocr. 15.314–315, who may be referring to *eisangelia* alleging deception of the people: Hansen 1975, 38–39.

118 Poll. 8.47; perhaps insufficient evidence by himself (Harrison 1971, 218–219; but see also Harvey 1990, 106).

119 [D.] 58.11, in relation to those bringing sykophantic accusations against merchants.

120 Arist. *Ath.* 43.5, Lys. 13.65.

121 On evidence for a renewed bout of concern over these issues of morality and public order in the 340s and 330s, cf. Fisher 2001, 62–67.

first *probolê* for sykophancy we hear of was that successfully directed against Agoratus (Lys. 13.65), some time before the trial from which Lysias' speech comes early in the 390s. His condemnation and fine of 1000 drachmae for sykophancy may then be shortly before the end of the war, or between the restoration of democracy and the subsequent trial. This too demonstrates growing concerns at this allegedly dangerous practice. Next, at the restoration of democracy, as Christ 1992 has demonstrated, the Athenians symbolically linked together their methods of self-protection against renewed *stasis* and anti-democratic threats from different quarters: every year, in the sixth prytany, the Assembly agenda invited both a decision whether to hold an *ostrakophoria* (whose targets were still believed to be disruptive or tyrannical elite politicians) and also *probolai* for sykophants (which were limited to three against citizens and three against metics) and *probolai* against deceivers of the people (Arist. *Ath.* 43.5). The sykophancy measure simultaneously reinstated the *dêmos*' conviction of the threat to the system from such less elite abusers of the legal system as well as from the top class;[122] but it also circumscribed and limited these denunciations.

As Christ 1992 argues, this was an especially suitable measure following the supposed abuses by, and against, 'sykophants' before and during the rule of the Thirty, the time when the rhetoric of 'sykophancy' reached its greatest intensity. Justification of the initial executions ordered by the Thirty focused on the 'sykophants' among the democratic politicians who had attacked the sympathizers of the 400 (X. *HG* 2.3.12, Arist. *Ath.* 35.3, cf. Lys. 12.5, 25.19), and prosecutions of the Thirty turned the language back on them, labeling them *ponêroi* and sykophants (Lys. 12.5). The narratives of these events, not only in historians such as Xenophon and Aristotle, but also in one law-court speech (Lys. 25.19–20, 25–27), assume agreement among all Athenians at the start of the rule of the Thirty that sizeable numbers of 'sykophantic' politicians constituted a major danger, and that people generally approved of their execution.[123] Christ regards this as excessive rhetoric, which should not be taken seriously, because the *dêmos* had after all supported such politicians and their prosecutions of alleged oligarchic sym-

[122] And at various levels of the court system metic offenders would have been most likely to be bringing charges in mercantile disputes, cf. [D.] 58.

[123] Cf. also X. *HG* 1.7.35 on Callixeinus' treatment when he returned to Athens, and the *Frogs* parabasis calling for an end to prosecutions of those involved in the mistakes of the first oligarchic government.

pathizers or failed generals (1998, 99). Such a view probably underestimates the shifts in attitudes among ordinary Athenians, many of whom may have changed their minds about whom they thought more responsible for the disasters befalling the city. Thucydides made this point in relation to the Sicilian disaster, claiming that many citizens blamed the politicians who had persuaded them to attack Syracuse and Sicily (8.1); similarly many may also have decided that the frequent prosecutions in the period 410–405 had been disruptive, when they faced the final defeat and suffered the deprivations and fear of the siege.[124] Whatever the past record and views of the client for whom Lysias wrote speech 25, those planning the defense must have agreed that appealing to hostility against such prosecutions and their instigators, and praising the value of reconciliation, would do their case good rather than harm.

5. *Conclusion*

In conclusion, it seems most likely that all these laws regulating the moral behavior of those likely to join or joining the political elite reflect not so much a malicious and snobbish hatred felt by men used to power towards newcomers, nor merely the envy of the less successful to all those prominent in wealth and status, as the desire felt by 'respectable' Athenians of very varied wealth levels to regulate the moral (including the sexual) behavior of all those who might be their leaders or representatives, according to the shared moral standards of reciprocity and of disciplined and orderly behavior. In this period they target even more those middling or newly rich citizens who are joining the ranks of the politically active as they do the older elite, though all may be considered *ponêroi.* The new democratic system succeeded remarkably well in enhancing the harmonious contacts in the competitive contexts of the festivals, in increasing recruitment to the collegiate magistracies and in spreading some social pleasures more democratically, all of which worked to strengthen the stability of the system. But it may also be seen as a consequence of these successes that criticisms of the apparently numerous *nouveaux riches* and new politicians, which appealed to the shared values of reciprocity, attacked on the stage and

[124] This is also suggested by the plausible accounts of the Assembly's commendation of the *Frogs* parabasis and approval for a second production, probably in early 404: see the discussions in Dover's and Sommerstein's editions.

in the courts some of their own alleged champions for supposedly crossing the boundaries in the pursuit of wealth, power and social advance, and also helped to persuade the people to introduce more regulative or repressive legislation, especially during the Archidamian War, and at the restoration of democracy. How much success the new laws had, or how far any verdicts under these laws were fair, is very hard to determine at this distance, and skepticism on both counts seems highly appropriate;[125] but this body of legislation was surely of great symbolic value in the defense of shared values and civic unity.

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[125] Cf. e.g. D. 21.36–37, with Wallace 2005, 152.

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CHAPTER NINE

KAKIA IN ARISTOTLE

J.J. Mulhern

1. *Introduction*

In this chapter I focus on the abstract noun κακία, commonly rendered in English translations of Aristotle by 'vice', and on the related κακ- nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, and especially compounds, that occur in Aristotle's works, as a guide to the items of which these expressions are used. There are about 900 occurrences of such expressions in Aristotle's works,[1] of which I shall touch here on just a few. Many of these occurrences have to do with human badness, and so my chapter reflects this volume's preoccupation with human badness. While κακία and the related κακ- expressions do not exhaust Aristotle's vocabulary for disapproval, this investigation offers a convenient starting place for a more comprehensive study of the bad in Aristotle.[2]

Aristotle was working against the backdrop of a long development in the Greeks' understanding of the bad, which included indigence, ugliness, bad ancestry, and poor reputation. This tradition sometimes paralleled their understanding of ἀρετή, which looked to wealth, beauty, good birth, and good reputation. Aristotle's awareness of this tradition appears from his quotations of or allusions to Homer, Hesiod, Solon, Alcaeus, Chilon, Theognis, Pindar, Plato, and the dramatists, among others. His contribution to the understanding of κακία, however, was

[1] Based on a reading of the texts supplemented by searches of the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae* and the *Index Aristotelicus*. Citations from Aristotle are based on the Bekker edition. If not, the name of the editor is added.

[2] Other dyslogistic abstract nouns and their cognates also occur in these works—φαυλότης, πονηρία, μοχθηρία, perhaps with different shades of meaning. The challenge of dealing with the systems to which Greek value expressions belong has been highlighted in Adkins 1972. Adkins seems to depend heavily on R.M. Hare, whom he cites, in explaining how Greek value expressions to the end of the fifth century retain their evaluative meanings as their descriptive meanings change.

different from these sources (other than Plato) in being avowedly analytic. The immediate occasion for his analytic contribution may be discerned, perhaps, in the Platonic dialogues, where ἀρετή and κακία are shown to be understood very poorly by the protagonists who discuss them, especially by the supposed experts, some of whom, such as Hippias of Elis, are represented as having been well versed at least in Homer if not in the whole poetic tradition. The argument of Plato's *Hippias Minor*, to which dialogue Aristotle has been thought to refer at *Metaphysics* 1025a6, is concerned especially with the putative badness of Odysseus.[3] During Aristotle's twenty-year association with the Academy, he probably would have been exposed repeatedly to arguments like those recorded in the Platonic dialogues. It is not surprising, then, that he made an effort to relieve some of the confusion about ἀρετή and κακία in his own work, especially in the course of his analysis of character (ἦθος) and of the things connected with it (τὰ ἠθικά). Understanding this analysis, as I hope to confirm, can be furthered by understanding the approach that he develops in the *Categories*.

After Aristotle, κακία plays a role in the biographical tradition stemming from the Peripatos, which preserves a focus on ἦθος. In this tradition, some lives are considered failures at least in part because of some special ἠθικὴ κακία or conditions related to it, as can be seen in the ways Nepos and Plutarch explain the failure of Dion.[4] And there is

[3] Mulhern 1968b, Weiss 1981, and Weiss 2006, ch. 4.

[4] Thus Nepos attributes Dion's downfall to *imprudentia* (*Dion* 8.3) and Plutarch to his not being an ἀνὴρ φρόνιμος (*Comparatio Dionis et Bruti* 4.7). The cause of Dion's downfall—*imprudentia* or ἀφροσύνη, if not an ethical vice itself, results from having an ethical vice, since, as Aristotle observes, κακία destroys the aim or σκοπός (*EN* 1138b22) and so the deliberation, as noted by Alexander of Aphrodisias, *Ἠθικὰ προβλήματα*, κβ. ὅτι ἀντακολουθοῦσιν αἱ ἀρεταί. Diggle 2004, especially 4–27, suggests that there is a continuous line, with antecedents in Homer, Herodotus, and Plato, from Aristotle's treatment of ἦθος through Theophrastus's Ἠθικοὶ χαρακτῆρες, as the title of the work is restored from Diogenes Laertius, to the mimes of Herodas and to the later Peripatetics, especially Ariston, one of whose characters is the Aristotelian and Theophrastean αὐθάδης, and even beyond. Diggle does not consider Nepos and seems to suggest that Plutarch did not know this work of Theophrastus (2004, 26, n. 77). However that may be, Nepos notes in 6.4 that Dion was not patient (*animo aequo*) and in 6.5 records his harshness (*acerbitas*). This ethical badness of Dion is illustrated in 7, where *modus* is used of his conduct—perhaps a recollection of τρόπος, which sometimes substitutes for ἦθος, notably in Theophrastus, but in Aristotle, too. Nepos notes that Dion's guards, if they had been inclined favorably, could have saved him (*ipsius custodes si propitia fuissent voluntate … servare eum potuissent*, 9.6). They were not inclined favorably, though, presumably because of his *acerbitas*. In the course of discussing Dion's ἦθος, Plutarch in 8.3 mentions Dion's having been admonished prophetically by Plato for his harsh

as well the case, presented by Nepos in some detail and articulated succinctly by Plutarch in his final comments on Alcibiades, in which a man ultimately may fail because he is capable of every good and every evil, but most importantly of every evil—the case of the πανοῦργος.[5] Thus getting a grip on Aristotle's treatment of κακία is important not only for Aristotelian specialists but also for students of later Greek and Latin literature, including biography.

Why, then, has the subject of κακία in Aristotle received so much less attention than the subject of ἀρετή? Perhaps because the theory of transcendentals, in which the bad is viewed as unreal or lacking in being, has been thought to be Aristotelian. This theory, with its roots in

character (αὐθάδεια) and quotes the Fourth Letter on harshness as the companion of solitude; the reference to the Fourth Letter is repeated in 42.5. The prophecy looks forward to Plutarch's account of the circumstances of Dion's assassination; although many ostensible friends were with Dion when he was attacked, none would help him, and so he was truly alone. Thus the biographical tradition picks up the concern for ἦθος, found also in the mimes, and interprets it in terms of *vitium* or κακία, *acerbitas* or αὐθάδεια. αὐθάδεια perhaps is not a faithful rendering of *acerbitas*, but it plays the part of Nepos's *acerbitas* in Plutarch's account.

[5] Nepos, *Alcibiades* 1.1–4; Plutarch, *Comparatio Alcibiadis et Marcis's Coriolani* 2.1. The case of Alcibiades is different from that of Dion in both Nepos and Plutarch. It is not a matter of tracing slim pieces of evidence that link the biographical tradition to the Ἠθικοὶ χαρακτῆρες and its sources in Aristotle and before with respect to a single excellence or failing of character. In both Nepos and Plutarch, Alcibiades exemplifies in his actions and passions the behavior that one might associate with many of the commonly accepted Greek virtues and vices. As Nepos says, it was agreed that nothing exceeded Alcibiades in vices or in virtues (*vel in vitiis vel in virtutibus*, 1.2), and all were amazed that there was in one man such inconstancy and such a variously directed nature (*tantam … dissimilitudinem tamque diversam naturam*, 1.4). Plutarch says that the character of Alcibiades evidenced many irregularities and changes (τὸ δ' ἦθος αὐτοῦ πολλὰς μὲν ὕστερον … ἀνομοιότητας πρὸς αὑτὸ καὶ μεταβολὰς ἐπεδείξατο, 2.1), and Plutarch goes on to speak of the irregularity of his nature (τὴν τῆς φύσεως ἀνωμαλίαν, 16.6). Plutarch addresses both nature and character in 23.5–6, suggesting that Alcibiades' apparent changes in character as he went from place to place did not reflect a change in nature; in this connection he contrasts his subject's external appearances (τὰ ἔξωθεν) with his genuine feelings and actions (ἀληθινοῖς … πάθεσι καὶ πράγμασιν). Still, he goes on to observe that Tissaphernes 'wondered that [Alcibiades] was devious and excessive in cleverness' (τὸ μὲν γὰρ πολύτροπον καὶ περιττὸν αὐτοῦ τῆς δεινότητος … ἐθαύμαζεν ὁ βάρβαρος, 24.4). In the comparison or joint judging of Alcibiades and Coriolanus, Plutarch points out that Alcibiades showed that there was nothing he would not do in his conduct of the citizenship (ὁ δ' Ἀλκιβιάδης πανοῦργος ἐν τῇ πολιτείᾳ, 2.1). Thus Alcibiades was not αὐθάδης as Dion was. In fact, Plutarch adverts again to the Fourth Letter in 3.3 and describes Coriolanus as αὐθάδης in 4.7 by way of contrast with Alcibiades. Plutarch seems to move back and forth from ἦθος to the separate virtues and vices that exemplify an ἦθος and that may be easiest to discern in an historical individual.

Origen and Plotinus and perhaps even earlier, which became accepted in medieval thought, and which has endured into recent times, links greater and lesser degrees of being, unity, truth, good, and sometimes beauty to one another on parallel ladders, as it were. And so badness has been considered a privation or absence of good and so of being, not something to be dealt with on its own terms.[6] This issue has been complicated by a longstanding concern with what has come to be called the problem of evil, which includes both evils which are not thought to have human causes, such as earthquakes, and evils which are thought to have human causes, such as wars. In Aristotle, though, κακία is much more than the absence of being, since it is a kind of cause of action which an absence of being, such as blindness (τυφλότης), which is a standard example of privation in the *Categories*, as at 12a27 and 36, could not be.

In this chapter, I shall treat Aristotle's view of κακία mainly under three heads. The first is represented when he is addressing κακία and κακός and their relations to other things in the *Categories* (section 2). The second head is represented in Aristotle's use of κακός and κακῶς in the *Topics*. Here it will be worthwhile to ask what is the range of things or of actions and passions that he considers κακός or κακῶς (section 3). The third head is his use of κακ- compounds, including those rarely used (section 4) and those more frequently used (section 5). His compounds sometimes stand in for phrases in which something such as an action is said to be κακῶς, as in the case of κακοποιία and κακῶς ποιεῖν.

2. *κακία and κακός in the* Categories

The *Categories* sets up an analytic scheme, apparently to deal with homonyma, which includes: semantics, especially the semantics of homonyma, or of things that have the same word or noun or name (ὄνομα) said of them but have different statements of what they are; the ten categories themselves, which contribute to the analysis of homonyma, including those of especial interest here (ποιότης or quality, which includes habit and disposition as well as ability; also the categories

[6] Aertsen 1996, especially chapter seven. Aertsen quotes *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* B 113 in which Kant gives the scholastic handbook maxim *quodlibet ens est unum, verum, bonum* (22). Aertsen also follows Aubenque in denying that the theory of transcendentals is Aristotelian (418).

action and passion or ποιεῖν and πάσχειν); and the four kinds of opposition, including especially contrariety (which is important because κακία and κακός have contraries) and possession-privation. In the *Categories*, doing or πράττειν is not addressed separately from making or ποιεῖν, though these are given separate analyses where it becomes important to distinguish them, as in Book VI of the *Nicomachean Ethics*. It appears in the *Categories* that Aristotle does not understand κακία as privation, though he does have the concept of privation as a kind of opposition as well as a word for it (στέρησις); privation is introduced at 11b18 and discussed at length in 12a26–13b27. κακία is a ἕξις, as is ἀρετή, as we see in *EN* 1106b36, since here ἀρετή is a ἕξις and since, if ἀρετή is a ἕξις and κακία is its contrary, κακία must be a ἕξις too (see also *Phys.* 246a10).

In the *Categories*, Aristotle notes that κακία and ἀρετή are contraries and that κακόν and ἀγαθόν are contraries, though he mentions that the contrary of κακόν may be κακόν itself in some cases, as in the case of excess and defect. And he observes that κακόν and ἀγαθόν are not the kinds of contraries that are in a genus, either in the same genus or in contrary genera. Aristotle is engaged in logical analysis of a certain kind here, especially the analysis of predicaments—whether, for example, κακία or κακόν is a quality, say, or something else. And he is concerned with what the contrary is—virtue or good.

In Aristotle's list of qualities, habits and dispositions are the first items. His examples confirm what one might suspect, that habits and dispositions are acquired qualities, though he does not make much of this point here. Habits are acquired through habituation, as Aristotle and we know. What about dispositions or διαθέσεις? Joachim notes: 'A διάθεσις is a ἕξις in the making, not yet formed, or a comparatively unstable state which may perhaps never become sufficiently established to constitute a ἕξις'.[7] So a disposition is acquired, too, but not yet completely. Next on Aristotle's list come qualities that are not acquired. These are as many as are said to correspond to some natural ability or inability simply speaking (ἁπλῶς ὅσα κατὰ δύναμιν φυσικὴν ἢ ἀδυναμίαν λέγεται), where φυσικήν has the sense of 'inborn' rather than that of 'developed', which it sometimes has elsewhere. These qualities include, for example, being constitutionally healthy or constitutionally sickly. Last in his list of the things that account for the fact that some people

[7] Joachim 1951, 85, n. 1. Joachim gives an extensive treatment of ποιότης at 81–84 to which my treatment here is much indebted.

are said, by some unnamed people, to be in certain ways are the pathetic qualities, or the qualities related to πάθος (passion or emotion).

Finally, what about πάθος itself, or πάσχειν? Why is it a separate category and not a quality? Here (10a1–2) Aristotle, using the example of anger, takes issue with the way of speaking that confuses passions with pathetic qualities. Doubtless there are some who are angry all the time, and anger is one of their habitual qualities. Further, there may be some who have an unusually great natural ability for anger, perhaps because their humors are unbalanced. Again, one might be made more inclined to be angry or to suffer anger by the treatment one receives as well as by one's constitution. This condition would be neither doing nor suffering but would fall, with habitual anger, into the category quality.

Although πάθος does not belong to the category quality, Aristotle's discussion seems to suggest that one might have a πάθος in a way that might be mistaken for having a quality. One might be angered momentarily, for example, even though one might not be angry habitually or even prone to anger. The example Aristotle gives is that of being more inclined to anger when pained (οἷον εἰ λυπούμενος ὀργιλώτερός ἐστιν, 10a7). Aristotle expressly connects anger with pain in the *Rhetoric* (1382a13). The person who is more inclined to anger only on an occasion of being pained should not be called angry except at the time, and so temporary anger does not fall into the category quality. Thus a temporary πάθος would be different from all the qualities, including susceptibility to being affected—the pathetic quality, even though the behavior associated with it might look as if it revealed a quality to the casual observer or to someone who took only one observation and inferred a quality from it.

All of these—the acquired habitual condition or disposition to anger, the natural ability, the pathetic quality, and occasional anger—might be bad; but they would be bad in different ways. Habitual or dispositional anger would be bad because it makes the person who has it impossible to live with or to work with, or nearly so. Inborn shortness of temper might be restrained largely by discipline, but it might surface again at a crucial and destructive moment. The pathetic quality irascibility would be bad but not as severe; one can work with irascible people, even though they can be needlessly annoying. Simply succumbing to the πάθος of anger on the occasion of suffering pain might be bad, but this badness would be a circumstantial badness; it would not constitute a quality and would not have the poisonous effect on human interaction

that one finds with habitual anger, though it might conduce to the wrong act in the circumstances.

In his arguments in the *Categories*, Aristotle has an eye on how the contraries good and bad come to be in people (13a22–31). His words anticipate the *Nicomachean Ethics* and the *Politics*, which are concerned with how the good man and the good citizen can be produced. Presumably, the man and the citizen are neither good nor bad at the outset. Was there an intermediate state between the contraries good and bad from which citizens might be made good? The following passage suggests that he thought so (*Cat.* 12a13–20 Minio-Paluello):

> Again, bad and good are predicated both of men and of many other things, but it is not necessary for one or the other of them to belong to those things they are predicated of (for not all are either bad or good). And between these there is certainly something intermediate—between white and black are grey yellow [*sic*] and all other colors, and between the bad and the good the neither bad nor good. (tr. Ackrill)
>
> καὶ φαῦλον δὲ καὶ σπουδαῖον κατηγορεῖται μὲν καὶ κατ’ ἀνθρώπου καὶ κατ’ ἄλλων πολλῶν, οὐκ ἀναγκαῖον δὲ θάτερον αὐτῶν ὑπάρχειν ἐκείνοις ὧν κατηγορεῖται· οὐ γὰρ πάντα ἤτοι φαῦλα ἢ σπουδαῖά ἐστιν. καὶ ἔστι γέ τι τούτων ἀνὰ μέσον, οἷον τοῦ μὲν λευκοῦ καὶ τοῦ μέλανος τὸ φαιὸν καὶ ὠχρὸν καὶ ὅσα ἄλλα χρώματα, τοῦ δὲ φαύλου καὶ τοῦ σπουδαίου τὸ οὔτε φαῦλον οὔτε σπουδαῖον.

Since men and citizens are neither good nor bad at the outset, it is possible for them to become either. Here, of course, the language is not ἀγαθός and κακός but σπουδαῖος and φαῦλος. While the different vocabulary may suggest different shades of meaning, the logical relations remain those of approved and disapproved contraries.

The passage itself suggests what Aristotle will make explicit elsewhere—that, for men, goodness and badness are acquired. The acquisition of goodness or badness is a matter of habituation, as he points out in *EN* 1103a14–b25. As he says by way of summary, ‘we are able by nature [to become good or bad], but by nature we do not become good or bad’ (ἔτι δυνατοὶ μέν ἐσμεν φύσει, ἀγαθοὶ δὲ ἢ κακοὶ οὐ γινόμεθα φύσει, 1106a9–10). This summary opens up the position that he will take in the *EN* and the *Politics*—that it is the work of statesmen to encourage the development of good men and citizens and to prevent the development of bad men and citizens.

3. *κακός and κακῶς in the* Topics

The *Topics*, at 64 Bekker pages, is much longer than the *Categories*, at 15 Bekker pages, and it contains about seven times as many occurrences of expressions of interest.[8] Here too Aristotle is often concerned with contraries and especially with arguments from contraries.

In the *Topics* we find that certain things are said to be bad, or at least that they can be said to be bad—for example, that every pain can be said to be κακόν (119a39). A partial list of bad things, qualities, actions, and passions in the *Topics* would include injustice, false opinion, drugs given together that might interact unfavorably (even if they might be good given separately), disease and unsound bodily condition, defect and excess, men, some corruptible things, and remembering or knowing base deeds.

κακῶς occurs eighteen times in the *Topics*—five times in 104a, ten times in 112b–113a, and three times elsewhere. In the fifteen occurrences in 104a and 112b–113a, κακῶς modifies ποιεῖν. Aristotle is thinking, apparently, of people who are doing harm. The five occurrences in 104a all have to do with something like the opinion that one ought to do good to friends and not do them harm (104a22–23, εἰ γὰρ ἔνδοξον ὅτι δεῖ τοὺς φίλους εὖ ποιεῖν, καὶ ὅτι οὐ δεῖ κακῶς ποιεῖν ἔνδοξον).[9]

The ten occurrences of κακῶς in 112b–113a apparently appeared in a table in which there were sentences which indicated doing well (εὖ ποιεῖν) to friends and enemies and doing harm (κακῶς ποιεῖν) to friends and enemies. Aristotle offers six of the ostensible ten combinations in our text.

[8] While it is true that the *Topics* often begins from commonly held opinions or ἔνδοξα, so that it may be a challenge for the reader to disengage Aristotle's own views from the discussion, to the extent that he was presenting his own views, the same might be said of other works in the corpus. What is clear is that Aristotle uses his own analytical apparatus to deal with the ἔνδοξα in the *Topics* as elsewhere. On this issue see now Slomkowski 1997, 19–20.

[9] Approximately this opinion may be found in Plato, for example, at *R.* 332d7–8, where Socrates questions whether Simonides means that justice is to do good to friends and evil to enemies (τὸ τοὺς φίλους ἄρα εὖ ποιεῖν καὶ τοὺς ἐχθροὺς κακῶς δικαιοσύνην λέγει; (Burnet)), and in 335a7–8 in the form that it is just to do well to a friend but to do harm to an enemy (δίκαιον εἶναι τὸν μὲν φίλον εὖ ποιεῖν, τὸν δ' ἐχθρὸν κακῶς). Shorey describes this view as 'a commonplace of Greek popular morality' (Shorey 1933, 209)—a point reiterated by Blundell (1989, 26): 'Greek popular thought is pervaded by the assumption that one should help one's friends and harm one's enemies'.

In the first of the other three occurrences (136b27–28), κακῶς may be being mentioned rather than being used, since Aristotle is discussing inflections and perhaps is using the definite article approximately as modern logicians use single quotes to indicate the mentioning of a word as opposed to its use.[10] Then κακῶς is used to modify πυνθάνεται ('asks', 158a25) and finally to modify ἠρωτῆσθαι ('been asked', 161a6); and so here Aristotle recognizes that one can ask or be asked badly in a dialectical exercise of asking and answering.

In short, the *Topics* incorporates the analysis of contrariety that may be found in the *Categories* into its use of κακός and κακῶς. The *Topics* also offers one compound—καχεξία, of which more below.

Beyond the use of the expressions κακία, κακός, and κακῶς in the *Categories* and the *Topics*, Aristotle's corpus includes twenty-four κακ- compounds or families of κακ- compounds, in which the first or κακ- part of the compound qualifies the second part or may be the object of the second part, or perhaps both in different occurrences.[11]

4. *Compounds rarely used*

Some of these compounds are used only once or twice, such as κακόβιος ('living badly', two occurrences), κακοθηνεῖν ('being in a bad state or weakly'), κακόνους ('ill disposed'), κακόπατρις ('of low descent'), κακοπέτης ('flying badly'), κακόπους ('weak in the feet', two occurrences), κακοπονητικός ('unfit for toil'), κακόποτμος ('ill fated'), κακόπτερος ('ill omened', two occurrences), κακοφραδής ('counseling evil' or 'counseling badly'), κακόφωνος ('ill sounding'), κακόχρους ('of bad color'), κακόχυμος ('ill humored'), κακωδέστερος ('more unpleasant to the nose', two occurrences), and καχύποπτος ('suspecting evil'). In using some of these infrequent compounds, Aristotle recalls the views of his poetic predecessors.

κακοφραδής ('counseling evil' or 'counseling badly'), for example, occurs in Aristotle's *Athenian Constitution* in a quotation from the verses of Solon (*Ath.* 12.3–4 Oppermann):

> What I said, I have done with the help of the gods:
> I did nothing in vain, nor was it my pleasure

[10] A well-known treatment of this distinction may be found in Quine 1959, 37–38.
[11] Smyth 1984, 252–253.

To act through the violence of tyranny, or that the bad
Should have equal shares with the good in our country's rich land.
...
I wrote down ordinances for bad and good alike,
Providing straight justice for each man.
If another man had taken up the goad as I did,
A man of malicious counsel and greed,
He would not have restrained the people. (tr. Rhodes)

ἃ μὲν γὰρ εἶπα, σὺν θεοῖσιν ἤνυσα,
ἄ[λλ]α δ' ο[ὐ] μάτην ἔερδον, οὐδέ μοι τυραννίδος
ἁνδάνει βίᾳ τι [ῥέζ]ειν, οὐδὲ πιεί[ρ]ας χθονὸς
πατρίδος κακοῖσιν ἐσθλοὺς ἰσομοιρίαν ἔχειν.
...
θεσμοὺς δ' ὁμοίως τῷ κακῷ τε κἀγαθῷ,
εὐθεῖαν εἰς ἕκαστον ἁρμόσας δίκην,
ἔγραψα. κέντρον δ' ἄλλος ὡς ἐγὼ λαβών,
κακοφραδής τε καὶ φιλοκτήμων ἀνήρ,
οὐκ ἂν κατέσχε δῆμον.

Here Aristotle shows his understanding of Solon's framework, which includes the ancestral place, the traditional better people or eupatrids (ἐσθλοί), and the traditional riff-raff (κακοί). For Aristotle, the men are the first things with which the πολιτικός and the νομοθέτης must deal, along with the place.[12] Solon apparently sees the κακοφραδής as someone whose counsel is bad because, since he is corrupted by the love of gain, he lacks the practical wisdom to deal effectively with the opposed parties. Perhaps Solon is alluding to the speech in which Idomeneus calls Ajax κακοφραδές at *Iliad* 23.483 because Ajax lets his wish that Eumelus should win the chariot race get in the way of his perceptions.

Being κακοφραδής differs from the other old badnesses, including badness of ancestry, since one might have or lack good counsel whether one is derived from good or bad ancestors. Aristotle adverts to bad ancestry in quoting from Alcaeus (*Pol.* 1285a37–40 Ross):

> Alcaeus shows that they chose Pittacus as tyrant in one of his table-songs, where he complains that 'baseborn Pittacus they made tyrant of the gentle and luckless city and thronged to exalt him'. (tr. Robinson)
>
> δηλοῖ δ' Ἀλκαῖος ὅτι τύραννον εἵλοντο τὸν Πιττακὸν ἔν τινι τῶν σκολιῶν μελῶν· ἐπιτιμᾷ γὰρ ὅτι 'τὸν κακοπάτριδα Πίττακον πόλιος τᾶς ἀχόλω καὶ βαρυδαίμονος ἐστάσαντο τύραννον μέγ' ἐπαινέοντες ἀόλλεες'.

[12] Mulhern 2007, 287.

The chapter in which this quotation of Alcaeus occurs is devoted to kinds of kingship. Because Aristotle's analytical approach distinguishes different kinds of kingship, he can view Pittacus not quite as the hostile Alcaeus views him. The rule of Pittacus is despotic, to be sure, and so it looks tyrannical; but it is not tyrannical, since the kind of monarchy was chosen, and Pittacus ruled over willing subjects (διὰ δὲ τὸ αἱρεταὶ καὶ ἑκόντων βασιλικαί, 1285b3). In quoting Alcaeus, Aristotle is invoking an older Greek view of badness and its contrast with an older view of goodness: κακόπατρις is contrary to εὔπατρις. For Aristotle, ancestry is not enough to guarantee either goodness or badness. What is κακός here is something over which Pittacus had no control, but Alcaeus blames him anyway because of Alcaeus' devotion to the eupatrids and their culture.[13]

5. *Compounds more frequently used*

Along with the fifteen rarely used compounds, nine compounds occur more than once or twice. These compounds include κακηγορία ('slander'), κακοδαιμονία ('unhappiness'), κακοήθεια ('bad disposition or character'), κακολογία ('verbal abuse'), κακοπάθεια ('distress'), κακοποιία ('evil doing'), κακοπραγία ('failure'), κακουργία ('wickedness'), and καχεξία ('bad habit', especially of body). A table showing the distribution of these recurrent compounds among Aristotle's works is provided in the Appendix.

The expressions in this list show that what it is to be κακός differs as one moves from one category to the other. This point may be important to the ongoing discussion in the scholarly literature on homonymy, especially the homonymy of good things—that good things are found in all the categories, though what it is to be good differs from category to category. Presumably the same would be true *mutatis mutandis* for bad things.

The categorial differences in goodness and badness are comparatively easy to see, for example, in the category place. A place may be good because it is on high ground (προσάντη, *Pol.* 1330a36), so that it is easy to defend, and a place may be bad because it is on low ground, so that it is difficult to defend.[14] Items in other categories would not be

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[13] This culture and the challenges to it are discussed in Donlan 1980.

[14] There is a textual issue here: Ross has replaced Bekker's πρὸς αὐτὴν and New-

good or bad because they were high or low; thinking that they were would constitute what Ryle has called a category mistake.

The discussion of homonymy has been taken up largely with trying to discern a theory of homonymy in Aristotle[15] rather than with seeing how Aristotle actually proceeds in his analyses of homonyma. Aristotle's use of recurrent compounds to treat κακός in the several categories offers an illustration of his practice in dealing with homonyma. As will be seen, all of the more frequently used compounds have to do with the badness of human beings, which is found in the categories associated with what people do or are disposed to do.

κακηγορία ('slander'), for example, occurs three times in Aristotle. In *Problems* 952b31, it has to do with the offensive speaker who attacks a civic official and thus appears to outrage the city itself. The language is of interest here, since it associates κακηγορία with ὕβρις as in the discussion of κακουργία in the *Politics* and the *Rhetoric* (*vide infra*). In *EN* 1129b23, κακηγορία figures in Aristotle's discussion of justice, which suggests that the law ordains certain kinds of conduct for certain people and forbids other kinds of conduct, such as slander. The second part of the compound suggests public speech; κακηγορία has to do with speech that would damage someone's reputation. Indeed, the badness of the action derives from the presumably unwarranted harm that it does to someone else. What seems unwarranted might well differ in different situations, though; what seemed warranted in Odysseus' treatment of Thersites, for example, might not seem to be warranted in Aristotle's time. In the third occurrence, at *EN* 1131a9, Aristotle is addressing situations in which what happens to one is not in one's power to control, and being spoken ill of in public may be one of these things.

κακοδαιμονία ('unhappiness') also occurs three times—in the *Poetics*, the *Fragments*, and the *Protrepticus*. *Poetics* 1450a17 is part of Aristotle's description of tragedy and is on the face of it a good example of his categorial analysis, since Aristotle says, 'Tragedy is an imitation of action and of life and of happiness and of unhappiness (εὐδαιμονία καὶ κακοδαιμονία), and happiness is in action, and the end is a certain action (πρᾶξίς τις), not a quality (ποιότης)', as Bekker gives the Greek.

man's πρὸς αὐτὴν with προσάντη. Rackham and Sinclair-Saunders follow Ross; they both use 'sloping'. There appears to be good reason to follow Ross, since height is recognized widely as a military advantage. Aristotle recognizes the advantage of height in treating walls and towers in *Pol.* 1330b32–1331a24.

[15] Shields 1999.

The inclusion of εὐδαιμονία καὶ κακοδαιμονία may be thought to be uncertain here from an editorial standpoint (Kassel 1965 rejects these words), and so I prefer not to rest much weight on it. Still, Aristotle uses τὸ εὖ πράττειν, as in *EN* 1095a19, to explain εὐδαιμονία, which is the contrary of our word. The appropriate category for κακοδαιμονία, then, is ποιεῖν, where ποιεῖν stands for πράττειν as well as for itself in the categorial framework. As I have noted above in section 2, while in the *Categories* πράττειν is not addressed separately from ποιεῖν, still these are given separate analyses where it becomes important to distinguish them, as in *EN* VI.

κακοήθεια ('bad character' or 'badness of character') occurs thirteen times, and some of the occurrences are revealing. At *Eudemian Ethics* 1237b28, the view of κακοήθεια as a disposition to take everything for the worse or in the worst way is attributed to foul people who take everything this way and have no friends and are distrustful of everyone because they measure other people by themselves. In *Rhetoric* 1389a16, where Aristotle is discussing character and age, the bad character which κακοήθεια suggests is associated with age rather than with youth (1389b20–21). For Aristotle here again, κακοήθεια is a disposition to take everything for the worse. For him, older people typically evidence κακοήθεια as a result of experience, presumably bad experience. Also in the *Rhetoric*, in 1416b10, in the course of describing how to deal with a false accusation, Aristotle uses the verbal adjective κακοηθιστέον with the dative of the agent to advise the rhetorical attacker to put the worse construction on actions that might have been undertaken for more than one purpose.[16] This is a case in which the attacker is advised to adopt or feign the character of the κακοήθης—perhaps good advice for the litigator.

These are the chief texts on κακοήθεια, and the badness indicated in each of these texts is not an action but a disposition to act and so a quality from the standpoint of the *Categories*.[17]

κακολογία and its cognates occur five times. The first occurrence, at *EN* 1125a8, is part of Aristotle's description of the great-souled man, and it concentrates on his manner of speaking. He does not go in for chit-chat about himself or other people; he does not like to be praised,

[16] Such as the choice of Odysseus by Diomedes.

[17] Other indications occur in other works, but they may not supply much additional information. *VV* 1251b3, for example, gives κακοήθεια only in a list, and there is no analysis supplied here beyond the connection with injustice.

since in his own view he is above most praise, at least; he does not malign even his enemies (he is not a κακολόγος or abusive person), unless he wants to offend them; and he is above asking for help. In *Rhetoric* 1381b7, Aristotle is in the process of examining why people love or hate one another; his view is that people love those who avoid being abusive or κακολόγους. In the other places in the *Rhetoric* (1384b8 and 10), Aristotle is engaged in his treatment of shame (αἰσχύνη) and of those who prey upon others who might be made to feel shame by those who chit-chat about them or abuse them verbally.

κακοπάθεια ('distress') and its cognates occur eleven times. *Metaphysics* 1093b26, for example, uses κακοπαθεῖν, where Ross translates 'have much trouble'. At *EN* 1096a1, Aristotle considers κακοπάθεια and ἀτυχία together. The combination of these two indicates an unhappy life. Another instance occurs at *EN* 1176b29, where Aristotle points out that κακοπάθεια would be too high a price to pay for happiness if happiness were merely play or amusement.

The main concentrations of κακοπάθεια and its cognates are to be found in the *Eudemian Ethics* and the *Politics*. In the *Eudemian Ethics*, in the table of excesses, defects, and means in Book II, κακοπάθεια occurs in the defect column as the defect of endurance (καρτερία) at 1221a9, and thus as the quality associated with not enduring enough. Here, though, there appears to be a transposition with delicacy or τρυφερότης, which is a far better candidate for the defect of καρτερία. The transposition is corrected shortly; that κακοπάθεια is the excess and τρυφερότης the defect is made clear in the accompanying narrative at 1221a28–31. The κακοπαθητικός is said to be called by this name by metaphor, presumably because this name is transferred from a more familiar context, though the context is not identified. In any case, the κακοπαθητικός has a disposition to endure all pain in the same way—too much and indiscriminately. In 1245b38–39, Aristotle speaks of those who are suffering badly in the sense of too much and indicates that they will consider it enough for them to suffer by themselves (ἱκανοὶ γὰρ αὐτοὶ κακοπαθοῦντες) rather than inflicting their distress on their friends.

In *Politics* 1255b36, κακοπαθεῖν is something excessively burdensome—the managing of δοῦλοι, who, as dependants, seem to have required a lot of instruction. In this passage, κακοπάθεια results from being involved with activities that would not be chosen for themselves but that might be instrumental to the activities that would be chosen for themselves—engaging in citizenship or philosophy. Thus κακοπά-

θεια has to do with the worth of the things that one suffers. It follows, I think, that κακοπαθεῖν represents a way of being affected that may fall somewhat outside the area that the actor controls, since it depends upon how much wealth one possesses and thus on fortune. Of course, if one did not have the resources to hire an ἐπίτροπος to instruct the servants, one would have to act as if one had the κακοπάθεια and do the instructing oneself, since someone has to do it in a well-run household. In other circumstances, one might have εὐπάθεια—the contrary of κακοπάθεια. Aristotle uses εὐπάθεια for being well done to in *EN* 1159a21, if not in 1171b24, where the sense seems to be closer to enjoyment, and for a good susceptibility of the well-conditioned athlete's body in *Problems* 887b23. One can begin to see here that κακοπάθεια is bad because it comes from having to put up with more bad things or with worse things than endurance—the mean—would lead one to put up with.

In *Pol.* 1269b10, Aristotle is dealing not simply with δοῦλοι and their management but with the institution of helotry (εἱλωτεία). He is concerned here with the helots as κακοπαθῶς ζῶντες, or those who live in a distressed way, who, as might be expected, are hostile to those who keep them living this way. And then, in 1278b27–28, Aristotle addresses the fact that most men endure much κακοπάθεια—καρτεροῦσι πολλὴν κακοπάθειαν οἱ πολλοὶ τῶν ἀνθρώπων—because they find not only the good life but life itself worth preserving. Here the linking of κακοπάθεια with endurance or καρτερία in the same subjects may seem inconsistent with the Eudemian table (1221a9), which suggests that κακοπάθεια and καρτερία would not belong to the same subjects, or at least not at the same time.[18] This is a subject for further study.

In these passages, apparently, Aristotle has in mind a disposition of the soul that is found in those who suffer more than they should because they find themselves in an inferior situation. Their situation might or might not be warranted by their merit—a point which Aristotle recognizes in his remarks on κακοποιία in *EN* 1125a19 (*vide infra*). Thus in both the *Eudemian Ethics* and the *Politics*, κακοπάθεια reflects Aristotle's awareness of something in the soul that affects behavior as well as reflecting one's social situation, though it is not an action or a disposition to act; it is rather a disposition to suffer, and to suffer too much or the wrong things.

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[18] So also in *EN* 1150b1–3, where Aristotle notes that the one who is defective with respect to what the many resist is soft and luxurious and that luxury is a certain softness.

κακοποιία ('evil doing'), which is used three times, appears in *Physics* 192a15 in an obscure discussion of the great and the small in the Platonists; I pass over this occurrence because of its obscurity. Where it appears again, in *EN* 1114b4, Aristotle is in the midst of arguing against the second Socratic paradox that no one does wrong knowingly.[19] Here the sense of κακοποιία is able to be controlled better than in the *Physics* because of our knowledge of other sources for the Socratic paradoxes including Xenophon, Plato, and Aristotle himself. In 1125a19, Aristotle is engaged in the analysis of small-mindedness and vanity, which are the defect and excess corresponding to greatness of soul. He says here that the people who are defective or excessive in this respect do not seem to be evil, because they are not doers of evil (κακοποιοί) but mistaken (ἡμαρτημένοι), presumably about their own worth (1125a28). In both of these texts it is clear that some action must occur for there to be κακοποιία. Being mistaken about one's worth is a different kind of badness from κακοποιία and may not be associated with action.

κακοπραγία ('failure') and its cognates occur ten times, including four times in the *Rhetoric*, all in Aristotle's discussion of righteous anger or indignation (νέμεσις), which discussion is designed ultimately to show the rhetorician how to deal with judges when the people involved in an action at law are claiming or are having it claimed for them that they ought to be pitied, though in fact they are unworthy of pity (1387b16–20). In 1386b9, Aristotle's contrast of indignation with pity (ἔλεος) depends upon the contrariety of κακοπραγία and εὐπραγία ('success'); the same character explains being pained both at undeserved κακοπραγία and at undeserved εὐπραγία. This concern with the mismatch of fortune and desert is reflected also in 1386b26–28. The connection of κακοπραγία with character is confirmed in 1387b14, where Aristotle is summarizing his treatment of indignation: he has shown why, when people of a certain quality or character (ποίοις) fail, it is necessary for those who are aware of the situation to be content with it, or at least not to be pained by it, and to give their verdict accordingly. The rhetorician therefore has an opportunity, by showing that those who claim pity do not deserve it, to keep judges from feeling pity and from giving the wrong verdict.

κακουργία ('wickedness'), which is used twenty-four times by Aristotle, apparently is thought by him to fall into the category of action, as in *Politics* 1308a19–20, where he points out that it is not easy for those

[19] Mulhern 1968a and 1974.

who hold office for a short time to do mischief (κακουργῆσαι). In *Politics* 1295b9–10, he couples the outrageous (ὑβρισταί) with offenders on a large scale and κακουργία with wickedness on a small scale, and he goes on to suggest in 11 that ὕβρις and κακουργία are the causes of injustice. Aristotle follows up on this contrast in *Rhetoric* 1389b8, where he is comparing behavior in youth with behavior in older age. Pointing out that the young violate Chilon's advice against excess in every way, and thus connecting his discussion with the gnomic tradition, Aristotle notes that, when the young commit injustices, they do so not out of κακουργία but out of ὕβρις (1389b20).[20] With their elders it is just the opposite; they commit injustices out of κακουργία, not ὕβρις (1390a18). Thus κακουργία seems to be associated with people of mostly settled character. Also, in 1391a18, Aristotle extends this approach in discussing the characters that follow on wealth, distinguishing the newly wealthy, whose injustices are the result of ὕβρις and incontinence, from people of old wealth, whose injustices are the result of κακουργία. Thus the badness of κακουργία is a badness of action, and the action might be anticipated because of the character of the bad actor.

καχεξία ('bad habit', especially of the body) occurs seven times. In *Parts of Animals* 668b5, in a passage which confirms the bodily character of καχεξία, Aristotle is treating the blood vessels, which start from the center and go out to the extremities, where he finds that sweat can go where blood cannot. It is to the decrease in the size of the blood vessels and to καχεξία that he attributes the phenomenon of sweating blood. In *Topics* 113b36, where καχεξία occurs twice, Aristotle is considering, as usual in this work, how arguments can be constructed and destroyed, and here he is concerned with the contraries εὐεξία and καχεξία. In the example, health is a product of εὐεξία, which seems to make sense, since good habits of body, such as taking exercise regularly and eating moderately, tend to engender health, though of course some people who take no care of themselves have such strong constitutions that καχεξία does not produce disease in the near term in them. But the order is reversed when one comes to sickness, since sickness produces καχεξία, he suggests, rather than the other way round. One can see this effect in people who contract some dreadful disease despite taking regular exercise and eating properly and who thus lose the ability to pursue εὐεξία.

[20] Which maxim of Chilon Aristotle had in mind is suggested by the repeated uses of ἄγαν. But while Diogenes Laertius attributes μηδὲν ἄγαν to Chilon, Stobaeus attributes it to Solon: DK 10.1 and 10.3.

In 157b20, Aristotle explicitly connects κακός with καχεξία in stating dialectically that disease is a greater evil (μεῖζον κακόν) than καχεξία. In both of these passages, trying to trace Aristotle's argument could take us far afield into both dialectic and medicine, and I do not intend to pursue the issues here. But both cases show καχεξία for what it is—a bad habit or a badness of habit connected with the body.

There are as well two occurrences in the *EN*, which again assume the framework of contraries. In 1129a20–22 and their context, Aristotle is pointing out that while often a contrary ἕξις ('habit'), which is a kind of quality, is known from its contrary, often ἕξεις are known from the things that underlie them, or to which they belong—their substances. So one can see what καχεξία is both by contrasting it with εὐεξία and by seeing what bodies lack firmness of flesh. These texts are confirmed somewhat in the *Divisions*, where, in 61.23, καχεξία is said to be weakness in body (ἐν δὲ σώματι ἀρρωστία) in parallel with thoughtlessness (ἀφροσύνη), which is weakness in soul (ἐν μὲν ψυχῇ ἀρρωστία).

As can be seen from studying Aristotle's use of these recurrent compounds, all of them can be associated with the categories ποιότης (κακοήθεια, κακοπάθεια, καχεξία) and ποιεῖν (κακηγορία, κακοδαιμονία, κακολογία, κακοποιία, κακοπραγία, κακουργία). All of these more frequently used compounds are used of human behavior or of things connected with it. This should not be a surprise, since, in the *Metaphysics*, Aristotle notes in speaking of quality (*Metaph.* 1020b17–25 Ross):

> There are the modifications of things that move, qua moving, and the differentiae of movements. Virtue and vice fall among these modifications [of things that move]; for they indicate differentiae of the movement or activity, according to which the things in motion act or are acted on well or badly; for that which can be moved or act in one way is good, and that which can do so in another—the contrary—way is vicious. *Good and evil indicate quality especially in living things, and among these especially in those which have purpose.* (tr. Ross, my emphasis)
>
> τὰ δὲ πάθη τῶν κινουμένων ᾗ κινούμενα, καὶ αἱ τῶν κινήσεων διαφοραί. ἀρετὴ δὲ καὶ κακία τῶν παθημάτων μέρος τι· διαφορὰς γὰρ δηλοῦσι τῆς κινήσεως καὶ τῆς ἐνεργείας, καθ' ἃς ποιοῦσιν ἢ πάσχουσι καλῶς ἢ φαύλως τὰ ἐν κινήσει ὄντα· τὸ μὲν γὰρ ὡδὶ δυνάμενον κινεῖσθαι ἢ ἐνεργεῖν ἀγαθὸν τὸ δ' ὡδὶ καὶ ἐναντίως μοχθηρόν. μάλιστα δὲ τὸ ἀγαθὸν καὶ τὸ κακὸν σημαίνει τὸ ποιὸν ἐπὶ τῶν ἐμψύχων, καὶ τούτων μάλιστα ἐπὶ τοῖς ἔχουσι προαίρεσιν.

Aristotle, it seems, when he speaks of good and bad, has mainly in mind the behavior of animals and especially of human beings, since human beings alone have purpose or προαίρεσις; and Aristotle's treatment

of προαίρεσις draws on the categories ποιότης and ποιεῖν as well as πάσχειν, though none of the recurrent compounds appears to belong in the category πάσχειν.

κάκωσις ('ill treatment') is not a compound, but there is reason to look at it, since it occurs ten times. In *Rhetoric* 1385a24, Aristotle has in mind a situation in which the decision of judges may turn on the kindness (χάρις) or unkindness of an accused individual, especially if the individual were kind to someone who had suffered bodily ill treatment or was in danger (ἐν ταῖς τοῦ σώματος κακώσεσιν καὶ ἐν κινδύνοις, 1385a24–25). In 1386a8, Aristotle has moved on to his treatment of pity and is addressing the things that might lead to pity, including ill treatment of the body (αἰκίαι σωμάτων καὶ κακώσεις); his concern is how the rhetorician might affect the judges' decision by evoking their pity or suppressing their pity.

κάκωσις and καχεξία together offer good examples of Aristotle's practice in the analysis of homonyma because the badness of a bad condition of the body is different from the badness of bad treatment or ill treatment of the body. Ill treatment is a kind of action that may cause a bad condition of the body, as when a stab wound becomes infected and produces a systemic condition. But a bad condition of the body, which is a quality rather than an action, would not cause ill treatment.

6. *Conclusion*

In this chapter I have offered a preliminary account of Aristotle's understanding of κακία based on a few of the many texts that might be considered in a more complete and exact study. In doing so, I have adopted for κακία the conventional rendering 'vice', which has a dyslogistic emotive force in English much as its Greek counterpart does and which is part of a system of words and concepts, including 'virtue', which recalls a comparable system in Greek—comparable, but of course not identical. This Greek system of words and concepts is drawn from earlier Greek literature, which Aristotle apparently knew thoroughly and to which he referred frequently, as well as from the materials of his own day, including those that originated in the milieu in which the dialogues of Plato were written. Some indications of this background have been given here. Thus Aristotle was indebted to Greek traditions about κακία which furnished both material and motivation for his analysis.

This account has illustrated especially the importance of understanding categorial analysis to our understanding of Aristotle's treatment of κακία. The distinctions among the categories themselves and the kinds of opposition are drawn together as Aristotle writes of things that are bad. They are drawn together especially in Aristotle's use of κακ- compounds, which exemplify the different ways of being bad that plague categorially different doings and qualities. Just as doing differs from being qualified, so bad doing differs from being ill qualified. And they all are bad in their different ways. To this extent at least, bad doings and qualities are homonymous—they are called by the same word or name κακός but have different statements of what they are.

Aristotle's understanding of κακία had to compete with other views and with inattention from the beginning, but it apparently retained its currency in the ancient biographical tradition. This tradition depends upon being able to show the different ways in which men succeed and fail; otherwise all biographies would tell pretty much the same story. Most men who fail, fail in a distinctive way, and I have instanced the cases of Dion and Alcibiades in Nepos and Plutarch. But there are many other ways to fail. Perhaps that is why, in *EN* 1106b34, immediately before giving his definition of the virtue related to character as a mean, Aristotle quotes the unattributed verse 'For men are good in but one way, but bad in many', as Ross gives it (ἐσθλοὶ μὲν γὰρ ἁπλῶς, παντοδαπῶς δὲ κακοί). The many ways of being bad are drawn into a coherent conceptual scheme in Aristotle's categorial treatment of κακία, and I have undertaken here to make that scheme more accessible.[21]

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Appendix. More frequently used compounds

	Ath	*Div*	*EE*	*EN*	*Fr*	*HA*	*MA*	*Metaph*	*PA*	*Ph*	*Phgn*	*Po*	*Pol*	*Pr*	*Prt*	*Rh*	*SE*	*Top*	*VV*
Slander / κακηγορία				2										1					
Unhappiness / κακοδαιμονία					1							1			1				
Bad disposition / κακοήθεια			1		2	2	1				2					4			1
Verbal abuse / κακολογία				1	1											3			
Distress / κακοπάθεια		1	3	2				1					3			1			
Evil doing/ κακοποιία				2						1									
Failure / κακοπραγία	2	2	2		2								1			4			
Wickedness / κακουργία	2			2	1	5			1		2		4	1		5	1		
Bad habit, especially of body / καχεξία		1		2					1									3	

CHAPTER TEN

PATHOS PHAULON: ARISTOTLE AND THE RHETORIC OF *PHTHONOS*

Ed Sanders

1. *Introduction*

In the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle notes a number of bad character traits, or *phaulotêtes* (singular *phaulotês*), indicative of a poorly developed character (or *êthos*). These *phaulotêtes* include spite, shamelessness and envy.[1] However, Aristotle was interested in emotions, and their connection with character, long before he formally embedded them in his ethical theory. It is already clearly visible in his early treatise *The Art of Rhetoric*. In this chapter I explore this connection.

In *The Art of Rhetoric*, Aristotle argues that an orator, in trying to persuade an audience, has three modes of persuasion available to him: logical argument (*logos*), the speaker's own character (*êthos*), and 'putting the hearer into a certain frame of mind' (1.2.1356a1–4: ἐν τῷ τὸν ἀκροατὴν διαθεῖναί πως).[2] He elaborates: '[The orator persuades] through his hearers, when they are led to emotion by his speech' (1.2.1356a14–15: διὰ δὲ τῶν ἀκροατῶν, ὅταν εἰς πάθος ὑπὸ τοῦ λόγου προαχθῶσιν). Thus, the third mode of persuasion is emotion (*pathos*),[3] which can legitimately

[1] *EN* 2.6.1107a9–11: ἔνια γὰρ εὐθὺς ὠνόμασται συνειλημμένα μετὰ τῆς φαυλότητος, οἷον ἐπιχαιρεκακία ἀναισχυντία φθόνος; others include incontinence and prodigality (*EN* 4.1.1119b31–32), and the generic 'vice' (*kakia*—*EN* 7.6.1150a1–5).

[2] All references in this chapter are to Arist. *Rh.* unless otherwise stated. All translations are my own, unless otherwise specified.

[3] Leighton 1996, 223–230 shows that, while Aristotle generally (e.g. *EN* 2.5.1105b21–23) includes both emotions and *epithumia* (appetite—e.g. hunger, thirst, sex drive) within *pathê*, in the *Rhetoric* he excludes *epithumia*. Leighton argues convincingly this is because Aristotle is only interested here in *pathê* that affect judgment (i.e. emotions), and appetites do not do so, or at least not cognitively—Viano 2003, 94 agrees; see also Grimaldi 1988, 14–15. Several other *pathê* mentioned at *EN* 2.5.1105b21–23 (confidence, joy, longing) are also not included in the *Rhetoric*, probably because Aristotle did not believe they affected judgment either. Aristotle himself notes in the *Rhetoric* that he has discussed the *pathê* that relate to persuasive argument (2.11.1388b29–30).

be used as part of an orator's armory of rhetorical weapons to influence his listeners.[4]

Aristotle discusses emotions in Book 2 of the *Rhetoric*, defining them as feelings that affect judgment and are accompanied by pain and pleasure (2.1.1378a19–21: ἔστι δὲ τὰ πάθη δι' ὅσα μεταβάλλοντες διαφέρουσι πρὸς τὰς κρίσεις οἷς ἕπεται λύπη καὶ ἡδονή).[5] This definition sees emotions as cognitive:[6] we perceive something (consciously or subconsciously, through any of our senses); that perception makes us feel something; and this feeling alters our judgment, which in turn can affect our actions.[7] In *Rh.* 2.2–11, Aristotle analyzes fifteen named (and several unnamed) emotions, stating the general psychological condition under which each arises, and who might feel each emotion, for whom, and in what circumstances. Of these emotions, *phthonos* (envy) is uniquely identified as bad (*phaulon*),[8] and in this Aristotle notes a truism of Greek culture.[9]

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[4] *Rh.* 1.2 appears to contradict 1.1, in which Aristotle said that 'slander, pity, anger and such emotions of the soul have nothing to do with the facts, but are merely an appeal to the juror' (1.1.1354a16–18: διαβολὴ γὰρ καὶ ἔλεος καὶ ὀργὴ καὶ τὰ τοιαῦτα πάθη τῆς ψυχῆς οὐ περὶ τοῦ πράγματός ἐστιν, ἀλλὰ πρὸς τὸν δικαστήν), and again 'one should not lead the juror into anger, envy or pity—it is like warping a carpenter's rule' (1.1.1354a24–26: οὐ γὰρ δεῖ τὸν δικαστὴν διαστρέφειν εἰς ὀργὴν προάγοντας ἢ φθόνον ἢ ἔλεον· ὅμοιον γὰρ κἂν εἴ τις ᾧ μέλλει χρῆσθαι κανόνι, τοῦτον ποιήσειε στρεβλόν). Dow 2007 is persuasive on how to resolve this contradiction; see also Fortenbaugh 1979, 147, Grimaldi 1980, 9–11, Wisse 1989, 17–20, Cooper 1994, 194–196, and Barnes 1995, 262. Whatever the tensions, it is clear from the rest of the *Rhetoric* that Aristotle *did* see a role for *pathos* in persuading an audience, so his comments in 1.1 need not detain us unduly.

[5] Frede 1996 discusses whether each emotion involves both pain and pleasure (pleasure in anticipating an action to alleviate pain), or just one or the other. She argues that Aristotle tends towards the former view in *Rh.* Book 1, and the latter in Book 2.

[6] Aristotle was the first scholar to highlight the role of cognition in emotion, an approach that has gained much currency in the last thirty years, decreasing emphasis on physiological explanations—see Konstan 2006, 7–27 for a discussion of modern approaches to the emotions.

[7] While Greeks had long understood the role of emotion in decision making, it was Aristotle who first presented it as a normal phenomenon, and not inherently problematic; cf. Grimaldi 1988, 12.

[8] For instance, Aristotle says that pity and indignation are both good (2.9.1386b11–12: καὶ ἄμφω τὰ πάθη ἤθους χρηστοῦ), as is emulation, while *phthonos* is bad (2.11.1388a 35–36: διὸ καὶ ἐπιεικές ἐστιν ὁ ζῆλος καὶ ἐπιεικῶν, τὸ δὲ φθονεῖν φαῦλον καὶ φαύλων). *Phthonos* covers the English emotion envy (a 'bottom-up' feeling, against someone who has something we lack), but can also translate possessive jealousy (a 'top-down' feeling, against someone who lacks something we have), malice, ill-will or grudging (LSJ)—cf. Walcot 1978, 22; Cairns 2003, 239. Smith, Kim and Parrott 1988 suggest that in English, 'envy' is rooted in some form of social comparison, while 'jealousy' is broader and often linked to romantic situations. They associate jealousy with such affective states as suspiciousness, rejection, hurt, and fear of loss, while envy is associated with such feelings as longing, inferiority, self-awareness, and a motivation to improve.

[9] *Phthonos* is in fact such a damning character trait that, while it appears occasionally

While there has been much modern scholarship on the *Rhetoric*,[10] excepting Grimaldi's commentary on Book 2 this has tended until recently to treat Aristotle's account of the emotions as a whole (or at best successively, with minimal commentary on each individual emotion). One notable exception is David Konstan's 'Aristotle on Anger and the Emotions: the Strategies of Status'.[11] Aristotle believed anger to be appropriate in certain situations, and only morally problematic in excess. This is axiomatic to his approach to the emotions, and explains why for him they are an acceptable tool in oratory. However *phthonos* (envy), because of its moral badness, creates issues for Aristotle's theory not pertinent to other emotions.

In this chapter I shall explore these. I start by showing how Aristotle argues in the *Rhetoric* that bad (*phaulos*) character is a crucial criterion for distinguishing *phthonos* within the group of emotions relating to others' good or bad fortune (section 2). This distinction survives the intellectual shift to the 'doctrine of the mean' in the *Nichomachean Ethics*, but there *phthonos* becomes a paradigm of badness (*kakos*) in which an ethically uneducated person feels excessively the otherwise acceptable emotion *nemesis* ('indignation') (section 3). I explain how Aristotle's ethical training can remove badness from one's character, showing that such training stops one feeling *phthonos* but still allows other (good) emotions pertaining to others' fortunes (section 4). Finally, returning to the *Rhetoric*, I demonstrate how *phthonos*' badness creates problems for the use to which Aristotle would like to put emotions in rhetoric—namely, affecting an audience's judgment—and I explore alternative uses an Aristotelian orator might make of the *Rhetoric*'s chapter on *phthonos* (section 5).

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in high-minded moralizing, regularly in accusation, and above all in denial (οὐ φθονῶ), it is almost never claimed for oneself—Eur. *Bacch.* 820, spoken by the crazed Pentheus, is a rare exception.

[10] E.g. Grimaldi 1980 and 1988; Furley and Nehamas 1994; Garver 1994; Rorty 1996; Gross and Walzer 2000.

[11] Konstan 2003. More recently, Konstan 2006 examines in significant detail the philological phenomenology of most of the emotions treated in *Rh.*, comparing them with literary use.

2. *The placement of* phthonos *in the* Rhetoric

2.1. *Pain and pleasure at the fortunes of others*

Aristotle generally treats the emotions in named pairs—anger and calmness, friendship and hate, etc. However, he treats as a group emotions (some unnamed) relating to the fortunes of others. In *Rh.* 2.8 he begins with *eleos* ('pity'), which he describes as pain at someone's undeserved bad fortune (1385b13–14: ἔστω δὴ ἔλεος λύπη τις ἐπὶ φαινομένῳ κακῷ … τοῦ ἀναξίου τυγχάνειν).[12] In 2.9, Aristotle discusses the relationship between pity and a number of other emotions. He begins by stating that *to nemesan* ('indignation') lies most opposed to pity in being pain at someone's undeserved *good* fortune, both emotions being felt by someone of good character (1386b8–12: ἀντίκειται δὲ τῷ ἐλεεῖν μάλιστα μὲν ὃ καλοῦσι νεμεσᾶν· τῷ γὰρ λυπεῖσθαι ἐπὶ ταῖς ἀναξίαις κακοπραγίαις ἀντικείμενόν ἐστι τρόπον τινὰ καὶ ἀπὸ τοῦ αὐτοῦ ἤθους τὸ λυπεῖσθαι ἐπὶ ταῖς ἀναξίαις εὐπραγίαις. καὶ ἄμφω τὰ πάθη ἤθους χρηστοῦ). *Phthonos* ('envy') appears to be similarly opposed to pity, and perhaps even the same thing as indignation, but in fact it is a pain excited by the perceived good fortune, not of someone undeserving, but of those like us (2.9.1386b16–20: δόξειε δ' ἂν καὶ ὁ φθόνος τῷ ἐλεεῖν τὸν αὐτὸν ἀντικεῖσθαι τρόπον, ὡς σύνεγγυς ὢν καὶ ταὐτὸν τῷ νεμεσᾶν, ἔστι δ' ἕτερον· λύπη μὲν γὰρ ταραχώδης καὶ ὁ φθόνος ἐστὶν καὶ ἐπὶ εὐπραγίᾳ, ἀλλ' οὐ τοῦ ἀναξίου ἀλλὰ τοῦ ἴσου καὶ ὁμοίου).[13] He goes on to say that these feelings will be accompanied by their opposite emotions (2.9.1386b25–26: φανερὸν δ' ὅτι ἀκολουθήσει καὶ τὰ ἐναντία πάθη τούτοις),[14] which will be pleasurable or at least not painful (2.9.1386b27: ἡσθήσεται ἢ ἄλυπος ἔσται).[15] Finally, in 2.11, Aristotle discusses *zêlos* ('emulation'). This is,

[12] Aristotle goes on to say that we must believe we could suffer the same bad fortune in order to pity, though this aspect of pity is irrelevant here.

[13] Konstan 2006, 111–128 disagrees with Aristotle's rigid separation of *to nemesan* and *phthonos*, arguing that *nemesis* had largely died out by the classical period, with *phthonos*, rarely used in the archaic period, replacing it to imply retributive indignation (among its other meanings); Aristotle resurrected *nemesis* (or *to nemesan* as he calls it in the *Rh.*) for his didactic purposes.

[14] Aristotle clarifies 'accompanied', saying that the type of person who feels indignation is the same type of person who feels its opposite in a contrary situation (not that each individual episode of indignation will be accompanied by its opposite).

[15] Aristotle often finds his desire to schematize restrictive. Here, for instance, if something is opposite to painful, it should be pleasurable, but in some situations might not be. For instance, any good person will be pained by a criminal escaping justice,

like envy, a pain at someone else's good fortune (2.11.1388a32–33: εἰ γάρ ἐστιν ζῆλος λύπη τις ἐπὶ φαινομένῃ παρουσίᾳ ἀγαθῶν ἐντίμων), though not because they have something, but because we do not: emulation (as Aristotle parenthetically explains) is a good emotion felt by good people, whereas envy is a bad emotion felt by bad people; emulation makes us act to acquire goods ourselves, envy to deprive someone else of them (2.11.1388a34–38: οὐχ ὅτι ἄλλῳ ἀλλ' ὅτι οὐχὶ καὶ αὑτῷ ἔστιν (διὸ καὶ ἐπιεικές ἐστιν ὁ ζῆλος καὶ ἐπιεικῶν, τὸ δὲ φθονεῖν φαῦλον καὶ φαύλων· ὁ μὲν γὰρ αὑτὸν παρασκευάζει διὰ τὸν ζῆλον τυγχάνειν τῶν ἀγαθῶν, ὁ δὲ τὸν πλησίον μὴ ἔχειν διὰ τὸν φθόνον)).[16] The opposite of emulation is *kataphronêsis* ('disdain') (2.11.1388b22–23: ἐναντίον γὰρ ζήλῳ καταφρόνησίς ἐστι, καὶ τῷ ζηλοῦν τὸ καταφρονεῖν).[17]

This collection of emotions, and their relationship to each other, is on first reading rather bewildering. Aaron Ben-Ze'ev has proposed a categorization based on two factors: whether the subject is better or worse off than the object; and whether the situation is deserved.[18] Ben-Ze'ev maps his reading of Aristotle as in Figure 1.

As shown, pity is an emotion triggered by seeing someone *worse* off in an undeserved situation, while indignation, envy, and emulation are all emotions triggered by seeing someone *better* off in an undeserved situation.[19] These emotions lie across an axis from, and so are opposed to

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but one's response to a convicted murderer being hanged will depend partly on one's attitude to the death penalty. Aristotle is aware of this difficulty, and gets round it by saying that if one does not feel pleasure, one at least will not feel pain. A modern ethicist might disagree, arguing that such a situation tests one's opposition to the death penalty.

[16] I do not see why a bad person might not emulate another bad person (e.g. a mugger emulating a bank robber), but Aristotle does not seem to envisage this possibility. Perhaps his desire to schematize, to present emotions as either 'good' or 'bad', has led him to ignore such situations.

[17] *Kataphronêsis* is difficult to translate, as no English word does it full justice. Barnes 1984 uses 'contempt', but this does not capture the self-satisfaction and desire to avoid similar misfortune implied by Aristotle. I believe 'disdain' does so better, but these aspects should be borne in mind wherever 'disdain' occurs below.

[18] Ben-Ze'ev 2003, 102–104. He notes that Aristotle likewise ignores other determinants of emotional response, such as culture (i.e. whether an emotion was acceptable and how intensely it was felt). I would add individual personality traits to the list: some people are more disposed to a particular emotional response than others—however we should note that Aristotle is interested in mass audiences, and while intensity of response might differ across an audience, one would expect some sort of normal distribution centered on the effect Aristotle predicts, with crowd mentality doing the rest.

[19] Note it is the entire situation (including our lack of goods) that we perceive as undeserved, not necessarily the object's possession of goods—this allows emulation

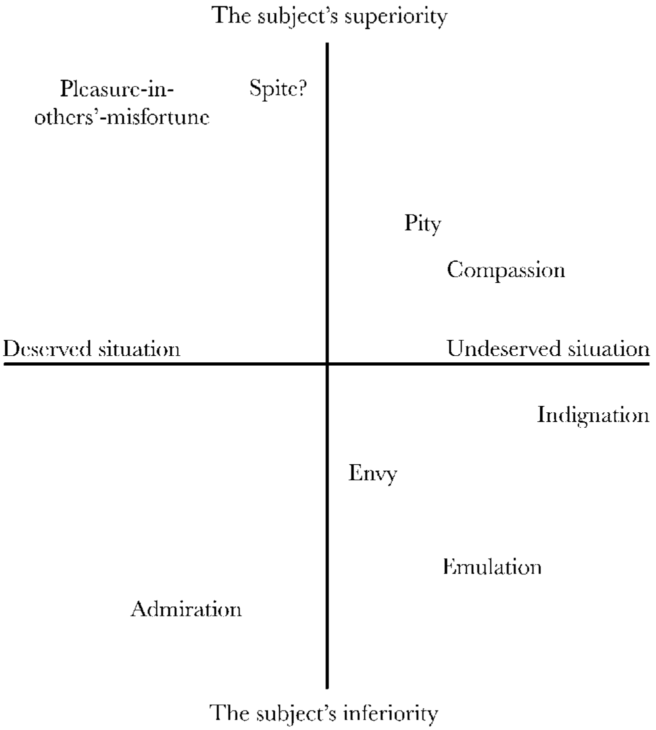

Fig. 1. Source: Ben-Ze'ev 2003, 104

(*antikeisthai*), pity. We cannot believe someone to be simultaneously better off and worse off than ourselves in relation to some desert, which is why Aristotle argues that if you envy or are indignant at someone, you cannot pity them.[20] Emotions in the top left quadrant are also directed at someone worse off than ourselves, like pity, but they differ in being felt in a *deserved* situation. They are also therefore opposed (*antikeisthai*) to pity, if in a different way to indignation, envy and emulation, and similarly cannot coexist with it. Emotions in diagonally opposite quadrants are true contraries (*enantia*), opposed both in the subject–object

to appear in this quadrant, though (as I argue below) deservingness is still not that important to emulation.

[20] 2.9.1387a3–5; 2.9.1387b17–21; 2.10.1388a27–30. We could of course believe them better off and worse off for different deserts, e.g. I could envy someone's wealth but also pity them for having cancer. However at any instant one emotion or the other would predominate, depending on which thought was uppermost.

relation and in the deservingness of the situation.[21] A painful emotion felt in an undeserved situation is indeed most directly contrary to a pleasurable emotion felt in a deserved situation, and again one cannot feel both sorts of emotion for the same person simultaneously. We can also note with Ben-Ze'ev that emotions on the left of the diagram are pleasurable, while those on the right are painful.[22]

Ben-Ze'ev's diagrammatic representation is very useful, but in a number of points it does not reflect Aristotle. First, it should not include either admiration or compassion: Ben-Ze'ev has been influenced by his own research as a philosopher into reading these without warrant in Aristotle's discussion.[23] Second, Ben-Ze'ev has ignored disdain, which clearly should be on the map somewhere, and probably (since it is *enantion* to emulation) in the top left quadrant. Third, Ben-Ze'ev has included spite, but *his* evidence for this emotion comes from the *Nicomachean Ethics* and, as I will show, these treatises cannot simply supplement each other. Finally, I believe he has misplaced some of his emotions, partly because his analysis does not take account of something crucial: character.

2.2. *A three-way categorization*

To go back a stage, Aristotle discusses three emotions in the *Rhetoric* that are pains we (the subject) feel on perceiving that someone else (the object) has some good. These emotions are indignation, envy, and

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[21] Arist. *Cat.* 10 notes that there are four ways in which something can be opposed (*antikeisthai*): as relatives (*ta pros ti*—e.g. double and half); as contraries (*ta enantia*—e.g. good and bad; black and white); as privation and state (*sterêsis kai hexis*—e.g. blindness and sight); as affirmation and negation (*kataphasis kai apophasis*—e.g. he is sitting, and he is not sitting). *Metaph.* 4.10.1018a25 notes that contraries are the most strongly opposed.

[22] Ben-Ze'ev 2003, 103.

[23] Ben-Ze'ev 2000 discusses a number of emotions felt at others' fortunes which do not occur in Aristotle, and his binary categorization comes from this work and is imposed onto Aristotle. In general it works quite well. Ben-Ze'ev 2003, 113, however, believes Aristotle's discussion of kindness in 2.7 is the same as our compassion—Konstan 2006, 156–168 argues, in my view correctly, that the emotion Aristotle treats is not *kharis* (kindness), but *kharin ekhein* (gratitude)—but Aristotle does not relate this emotion to any of those in 2.8–11. Similarly, Aristotle's comments on admiration quoted by Ben-Ze'ev 2003, 118 are that we emulate those we admire (2.11.1388b20), which does not amount to another emotion, merely a descriptive verb applied to the emulator. Ben-Ze'ev goes on to argue 'that admiration, rather than emulation, is the opposite of contempt' (2003, 118), and proceeds to put admiration in a different quadrant from emulation; none of this is justified by Aristotle's text.

emulation, and in a number of short passages Aristotle tells us how to distinguish them.[24] We feel indignation because the other person does not deserve the good (1386b10–11: τὸ λυπεῖσθαι ἐπὶ ταῖς ἀναξίαις εὐπραγίαις), but this is explicitly contrasted with envy, where it is not a concern (2.9.1386b18–20: λύπη μὲν γὰρ ταραχώδης καὶ ὁ φθόνος ἐστὶν καὶ ἐπὶ εὐπραγίᾳ, ἀλλ' οὐ τοῦ ἀναξίου ἀλλὰ τοῦ ἴσου καὶ ὁμοίου), nor is the other's deservingness mentioned in connection with emulation. We feel emulation because we want the same good as someone else, though we have no desire to deprive them of theirs (2.11.1388a34–37: οὐχ ὅτι ἄλλῳ ἀλλ' ὅτι οὐχὶ καὶ αὐτῷ ἔστιν …· ὁ μὲν γὰρ αὐτὸν παρασκευάζει διὰ τὸν ζῆλον τυγχάνειν τῶν ἀγαθῶν), but in both indignation and envy our concern is with someone else owning the good, not with our own lack (2.9.1386b20–21: τὸ δὲ μὴ ὅτι αὐτῷ τι συμβήσεται ἕτερον, ἀλλὰ δι' αὐτὸν τὸν πλησίον, ἅπασιν ὁμοίως δεῖ ὑπάρχειν; 2.11.1388a37–38: ὁ δὲ τὸν πλησίον μὴ ἔχειν διὰ τὸν φθόνον). Finally, Aristotle states it is bad to feel envy,[25] but good to feel emulation (2.11.1388a35–36: διὸ καὶ ἐπιεικές ἐστιν ὁ ζῆλος καὶ ἐπιεικῶν, τὸ δὲ φθονεῖν φαῦλον καὶ φαύλων), and indignation is also associated with good character (2.9.1386b11–12: καὶ ἄμφω τὰ πάθη [*to eleein* and *to nemesan*] ἤθους χρηστοῦ; 2.9.1386b33–1387a1: καὶ ἔστιν τοῦ αὐτοῦ ἤθους ἅπαντα ταῦτα [*to nemesan* and others (see below)], τὰ δ' ἐναντία τοῦ ἐναντίου· ὁ γὰρ αὐτός ἐστιν ἐπιχαιρέκακος καὶ φθονερός).[26] We can see, therefore, that Aristotle describes how these emotions differ from each other by reference to three, not two, factors: whether the subject's character is good or bad; whether the object's deservingness is important; and whether the good itself is

[24] He characterizes each emotion according to who feels it, when, and against whom (2.1.1378a23–26); but this is not how he distinguishes one emotion from another.

[25] It is perhaps odd that Aristotle does not mention envy's badness in the chapter he nominally devotes to that emotion (2.10). However, its badness is irrelevant to the 'Who feels it? When? Against whom?' questions that are the main focus of each chapter; the point most logically belongs where he compares one emotion with another. He has already told us at 2.9.1386b33–1387a1 that the *phthoneros* (and the *epikhairekakos*) is of a contrary character to the *khrêstos* who feels indignation (and various other emotions), so it would be unnecessary to repeat it until he compares *phthonos* with another emotion, which he does not do till 2.11.1388a34–38 (after which follow a number of situations inspiring *zêlos* that contrast directly with individual situations inspiring *phthonos*—see note 52 below). In the *EN* too, envy is one of only a handful of bad emotions, along with spite and shamelessness (*EN* 2.6.1107a9–11). These remarks are all consistent, so we should not take the absence of a statement of envy's badness in 2.10 as problematic.

[26] Grimaldi 1988, 56 cites Vahlen 1914, 266–268, on 'the similarity, if not the identity, in the *Poetics* of ἐπιεικής, χρῆστος (*sic*), σπουδαῖος to denote the morally good'. Bonitz 1870, 813b37–38 notes that *epieikês* and *khrêstos* are opposite to *phaulos*.

specifically desired. Each factor shows one emotion differing markedly from the other two.[27]

Turning to pleasurable emotions at someone else's bad fortune, Aristotle has provided one, disdain, and stated that it is the opposite of emulation (2.11.1388b22–23: ἐναντίον γὰρ ζήλῳ καταφρόνησίς ἐστι, καὶ τῷ ζηλοῦν τὸ καταφρονεῖν): if we emulate those who have certain goods, we disdain those who do not; if we wish to copy someone in achieving something positive, we do not wish to copy them in achieving something negative (2.11.1388b23–26: ἀνάγκη δὲ τοὺς οὕτως ἔχοντας ὥστε ζηλῶσαί τινας ἢ ζηλοῦσθαι καταφρονητικοὺς εἶναι τούτων τε καὶ ἐπὶ τούτοις ὅσοι τὰ ἐναντία κακὰ ἔχουσι τῶν ἀγαθῶν τῶν ζηλωτῶν).[28] Just as in emulation we feel a pain at not having the same goods as someone else, so in disdain we feel pleasure that we are not suffering such evils ourselves, what Grimaldi calls 'the pleasure which comes with self-satisfaction'.[29]

The opposites of indignation and envy are more complicated, not least because it is not immediately clear whether there are two feelings or one. Having compared indignation with envy (see above), Aristotle goes on to talk about the opposite emotions accompanying the ones to which he has just referred, and I quote the passage in full for clarity (*Rh.* 2.9.1386b25–1387a3):

> And clearly the opposite emotions will accompany them (*toutois*). For whoever is pained by someone suffering bad fortune undeservedly, will be pleased or at least not pained by those who suffer bad fortune oppositely [i.e. deservedly]. For instance, no good person (*khrêstos*) would be pained at parricides or murderers being punished; one must rejoice at such things, just as at people having good fortune deservedly. For both things are just, and make the good person (*epieikê*) rejoice, since he must expect the same thing to happen to him as to someone like him. And all these emotions are felt by the same character (*êthous*); and contrary

[27] We should note that Aristotle is not overly interested in mixed motives here, but presumably one can feel both indignation and emulation simultaneously, if one both wants what someone else has and thinks the other person should not have it. However, since one cannot be both morally good and morally bad, for Aristotle feeling envy precludes feeling either of the other two emotions as well (though see note 16 above).

[28] Aristotle goes on to say that we can also feel *kataphronêsis* for those with good fortune, when it does not come with the right sort of goods (2.11.1388b26–28: διὸ πολλάκις καταφρονοῦσιν τῶν εὐτυχούντων, ὅταν ἄνευ τῶν ἐντίμων ἀγαθῶν ὑπάρχῃ αὐτοῖς ἡ τύχη)—equivalent, in the modern world, to our contemptuous feeling for those we know will squander their lottery winnings, or for the *nouveaux riches* who buy vulgar status symbols.

[29] Grimaldi 1988, 179.

feelings are felt by the contrary character: for the same person is spiteful (*epikhairekakos*) and envious (*phthoneros*), as someone pained by something's existence or genesis will necessarily rejoice at its absence or destruction.

φανερὸν δ' ὅτι ἀκολουθήσει καὶ τὰ ἐναντία πάθη τούτοις· ὁ μὲν γὰρ λυπούμενος ἐπὶ τοῖς ἀναξίως κακοπραγοῦσιν ἡσθήσεται ἢ ἄλυπος ἔσται ἐπὶ τοῖς ἐναντίως κακοπραγοῦσιν, οἷον τοὺς πατραλοίας καὶ μιαιφόνους, ὅταν τύχωσι τιμωρίας, οὐδεὶς ἂν λυπηθείη χρηστός· δεῖ γὰρ χαίρειν ἐπὶ τοῖς τοιούτοις, ὡς δ' αὔτως καὶ ἐπὶ τοῖς εὖ πράττουσι κατ' ἀξίαν· ἄμφω γὰρ δίκαια, καὶ ποιεῖ χαίρειν τὸν ἐπιεικῆ· ἀνάγκη γὰρ ἐλπίζειν ὑπάρξαι ἂν ἅπερ τῷ ὁμοίῳ, καὶ αὑτῷ. καὶ ἔστιν τοῦ αὐτοῦ ἤθους ἅπαντα ταῦτα, τὰ δ' ἐναντία τοῦ ἐναντίου· ὁ γὰρ αὐτός ἐστιν ἐπιχαιρέκακος καὶ φθονερός· ἐφ' ᾧ γάρ τις λυπεῖται γιγνομένῳ καὶ ὑπάρχοντι, ἀναγκαῖον τοῦτον ἐπὶ τῇ στερήσει καὶ τῇ φθορᾷ τῇ τούτου χαίρειν·

Where Aristotle says 'And clearly the opposite emotions will accompany them', he initially appears to be talking about indignation and envy, the emotions he has been contrasting in the immediately preceding paragraph. In fact, in the following sentence, Aristotle talks about being pained by undeserved *mis*fortune, which is not indignation but pity. *Toutois* therefore refers to all the emotions so far discussed, pity as well as indignation and envy, and Aristotle deals with these three emotions one after another.[30]

First, Aristotle says that the man pained by undeserved misfortune (i.e. the person who feels pity), already identified with the person who feels indignation, will also feel joy at deserved *mis*fortune (2.9.1386b26–28 and 30) and deserved *good* fortune (2.9.1386b30–31).[31] We therefore have four emotions: pity; indignation; pleasure at deserved misfortune (a sort of satisfaction at someone getting their 'come-uppance'); and pleasure at deserved good fortune (for which I shall use Ben-Ze'ev's 'happy for').[32] All these emotions will be felt by people of the same good character (i.e. *epieikê* [2.9.1386b32] or *êthous khrêstou* [2.9.1386b11–12]), people who can diagnose others' deserts correctly and feel appropriate pain or joy. Aristotle goes on to state that contrary feelings will be felt by the contrary—i.e. *phaulos*—character: that the *phthoneros* ('the envious man') is also *epikhairekakos* ('spiteful'). Aristotle says later that this joy is roused similarly to envy,[33] which must mean: by the misfortunes

30 *Ibid.* 155.

31 Cf. 2.9.1387b16–18; see Cooper 1996, 242, who draws attention to this unnamed good contrary to indignation.

32 Ben-Ze'ev 2003, 118.

33 2.10.1388a24–27: δῆλον δὲ καὶ ἐφ' οἷς χαίρουσιν οἱ τοιοῦτοι καὶ ἐπὶ τίσι καὶ πῶς ἔχοντες· ὡς γὰρ ἔχοντες λυποῦνται, οὕτως ἔχοντες ἐπὶ τοῖς ἐναντίοις ἡσθήσονται.

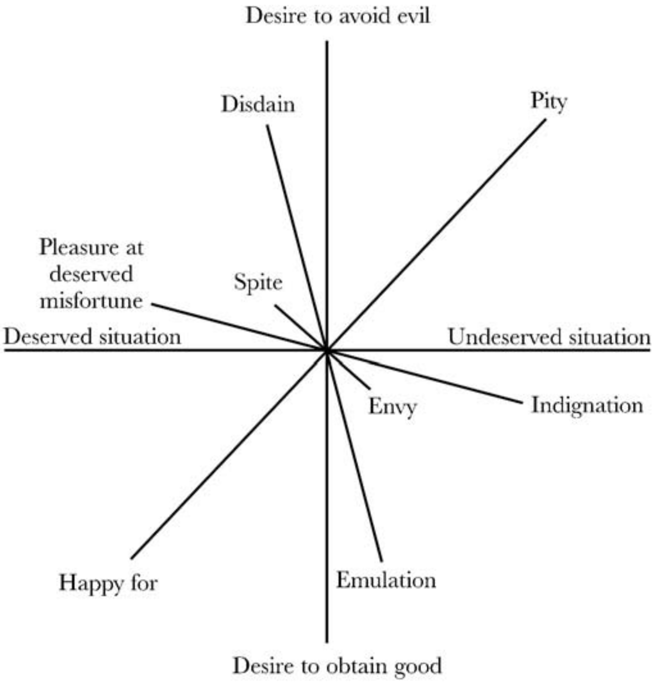

Fig. 2. Revised diagram of emotions relating to others' fortunes

of equals, rather than the deserving. This is appropriate, as someone morally bad will be unable to diagnose deserts correctly. He will feel envy and spite whether the object deserves it or not.[34]

Ben-Ze'ev's diagram would therefore be more in tune with Aristotle's thinking if it looked something like Figure 2. There are three pleasurable emotions—pleasure at deserved misfortune, spite and disdain—respectively opposite to indignation, envy and emulation. Pity also has an opposite: 'happy for'. Each pair of emotions is aroused in the same individual in directly contrary circumstances, which is why each emotion is linked to its direct opposite.

[34] Aristotle has devoted almost the entirety of one chapter to each painful emotion, with no more than a few lines for each contrary pleasurable emotion (cf. Ben-Ze'ev 2003, 103), a scanty treatment similarly applied to shamelessness (2.6.1385a14–15) and ingratitude (2.7.1385b7–10).

I would mention three qualifications to this diagram. First, I am copying Ben-Ze'ev in excluding a character axis (which would be in a third dimension perpendicular to the page), though for the sake of clarity rather than through oversight—it is this that makes envy and spite appear close to the center, since (bad) character is the only significant factor in these emotions. Second, emotions will not always be felt to the same degree, so a response will be somewhere along a line rather than at a fixed point. Finally, the exact emotional response will vary between individuals and in different situations, so each emotion could perhaps best be represented by a teardrop centered on the origin, the line being an average response. While this representation is therefore not quite perfect, I believe its extra clarity makes up for these minor imperfections, so long as they are borne in mind. The diagram is perhaps overly schematizing, but no more than Aristotle's thought in the *Rhetoric*.[35]

3. *The placement of* phthonos *in the* Ethics

In the *Rhetoric*, Aristotle appears to argue that there are only two types of character (*êthos*): good (*epieikes* or *khrêston*) and bad (*phaulon*). The former can feel a number of emotions related to others' fortunes (pity and 'happy for', indignation and 'pleasure at deserved misfortune', emulation and disdain); the latter only envy and spite, depending whether the fortune is bad or good. Good people cannot feel envy and spite at all; bad people can feel nothing else. If this were true, an orator's audience could consist only of people whose characters were either good or bad. People whose characters were somewhere in the middle, or who were sometimes good and sometimes bad, would not be envisaged. Anticipating slightly the *Ethics*, where Aristotle argues that to be morally virtuous requires an ethical education, this would imply that those without such moral virtue (i.e. virtually everyone) are bad.[36] Is

[35] See notes 15, 16 and 27 above.

[36] We should note that there are two ways in which the terms good (*epieikês* or *khrêstos*) and bad (*phaulos*) can be used: morally and socially. For an archaic aristocrat such as Theognis, the two senses are identical, 'the good' being synonymous with aristocracy and 'the base' with commoners. In democratic Athens, with its strong demotic ideology, the two become separated, so Euripides can talk about an honest poor man (*phaulon khrêston*), contrasted with a bad cleverer one (*kakon sophôteron*) in *Ion* 834–835. While Aristotle's aristocratic audience in his *Ethics* lectures might well think of

Aristotle really arguing that the vast majority of his orator's audience will be morally bad individuals, capable of feeling only envy and spite? It seems inherently unlikely. If nothing else, why would Aristotle then devote 186 lines to good people (66 lines to pity, 82 to indignation and 38 to emulation) and only 44 to bad (envy)?[37] Indeed, if the vast majority of the audience could only feel envy and spite, why even bother teaching an orator about pity and indignation? Such an interpretation would place Aristotle at odds with oratorical practice, where appeals to an audience's pity and indignation (or righteous anger) are commonplace.[38]

However, the Greek words *phaulos*, *epieikês* and *khrêstos* are much more flexible, and have a broader application both socially and morally (see note 36 above), than the English words 'bad' and 'good', and in both interpretations (social and moral) moving from one to the other is possible. We should instead perhaps translate these words, in this context, as 'characteristic of moral goodness' and 'characteristic of moral badness', which is suggestive of a continuum.[39] Aristotle does not believe most people are uniformly bad or uniformly good but somewhere in the middle.[40] Most people's characters have been partially educated, partially encouraged towards moral goodness (I discuss how in section 4.2 below). Much of the time people will not feel emotions that are either *phaulos* or *epieikês*. There will be instances where they feel one or the other, but with no reliability, and it is the orator's job to try to tug them towards one end of the spectrum or the other, to try to awake an

themselves as both socially and morally good, for Aristotle himself these two senses are not identical; though it should be noted that to become morally good (through studying ethics), social 'goodness' (i.e. wealth and leisure) would be a prerequisite (Hutchinson 1995, 203; Nussbaum 1994, 55–56). It is possible that Aristotle adopts a lower standard of 'goodness' for the mass audience his orator (in the *Rhetoric*) will address, but there is no reason to suppose this is necessarily so.

[37] Lines as per the Oxford Classical Text.

[38] Carey 1996, 402–405 discusses righteous anger and pity, among other emotions roused; Dover 1974, 195–196 notes that orators often attempted to rouse a jury's pity, sometimes by bringing their children into court; Allen 2003, 80–86 argues that juries were roused to controlled righteous anger (*orgê*), in an amount appropriate to the crime, an emotion Aristotle separates off as *to nemesan*; Webb 1997, 120–125 shows that Roman oratory likewise attempted to arouse *misericordia* ('pity') and *indignatio* ('indignation').

[39] As these formulations are clumsy in English, I shall continue using the designations 'bad' and 'good', but the broader interpretation should be borne in mind.

[40] Broadie 1991, 102.

indignant or envious emotional response by appealing to their moral education or lack of it.

Aristotle (unlike the Stoics) does not believe that emotions are inimical to reason, and should therefore be eliminated as far as possible.[41] In the *Nicomachean Ethics*, he argues that a proper measure of emotion is the morally desirable response, and he calls that proper measure the mean (*mesotês*); he goes so far as to define virtue in relation to feeling appropriate emotion.[42] However, one might not feel the proper amount of emotion: one might feel an excess or a deficiency (both are opposed to the mean and to each other), and both extremes are vices.[43] For example: feeling a lack of fear when proper (the mean) is bravery, a virtue; feeling a lack of fear even when one should feel fear (the excessive vice) is rashness; feeling fear too often (the defective vice) is cowardice (*EN* 3.7.1115b11–1116a9). Aristotle argues (*EN* 2.6.1106a25–b3) that the location of the mean will vary, not just from situation to situation, but from person to person. For instance, if eating two measures of food would be too little for all and ten too much, the right amount (the mean) will not necessarily be six measures: this would be too little for a champion athlete, but too much for a beginner. Thus six measures might be an excess, a deficiency, or a mean. Means are therefore relative to us, not to the object. It is for this reason that a proper emotional response might be part-way along a line in Figure 2, rather than at the line's end.

In the *Eudemian Ethics*, *nemesis* is a mean, and covers four emotions: pain at undeserved good or bad fortune ('indignation' and 'pity'), and pleasure at deserved good or bad fortune ('happy for' and 'pleasure at deserved misfortune').[44] The excessive vice is *phthonos*, which is described as a pain felt at deserved good fortune ('envy'); the defective

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41 Nussbaum 1994, 9–10, 41–42; Gill 2003, 29; Knuuttila 2004, 6.

42 As Nussbaum 1996, 316–317 points out, this means that even a correct action is not virtuous unless it has been motivated by morally appropriate emotions.

43 *EN* 2.6.1107a2–3: μεσότης δὲ δύο κακιῶν, τῆς μὲν καθ' ὑπερβολὴν τῆς δὲ κατ' ἔλλειψιν; 2.8.1108b11–12: τριῶν δὴ διαθέσεων οὐσῶν, δύο μὲν κακιῶν, τῆς μὲν καθ' ὑπερβολὴν τῆς δὲ κατ' ἔλλειψιν, μιᾶς δ' ἀρετῆς τῆς μεσότητος, πᾶσαι πάσαις ἀντίκεινταί πως.

44 While this definition is idiosyncratic (to say the least), these are the same four emotions that Aristotle treats together at *Rh.* 2.9.1386b25–33 where he argues they are all the product of the same good character, so there is at least some logic here. One of the four emotions (pain at undeserved good fortune) is the same as *to nemesan* in the *Rh.* (and *nemesis* in the *EN*).

vice is unnamed, but is felt by the *epikhairekakos*, and is a joy at undeserved misfortune ('spite').[45]

In the *Nicomachean Ethics*, *nemesis* is again the mean, and thus a morally acceptable emotion, providing it is felt only when the object's good fortune is undeserved (righteous indignation, the *to nemesan* of the *Rhetoric*; the other three good emotions are dropped from the definition). *Phthonos* is once again identified with an excess of indignation, feeling pain even when good fortune is deserved ('envy'); and this time the defective vice, being so far short of pain that one feels joy (presumably at undeserved bad fortune), is named as *epikhairekakia* ('spite').[46] In the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle seems to have replaced four emotions identified in the *Rhetoric* with only three, having lost 'pleasure at deserved misfortune', the second virtuous emotion. However, let us look closer. In suggesting that, in moving from indignation to envy, one moves from virtue to vice and ceases to concern oneself with desert, Aristotle is paralleling what he said in the *Rhetoric*, albeit in the language of his newly developed doctrine of the mean.[47] It is by no means so obvious why spite should be the defective vice: one would expect the defect to be an inability to be indignant even when appropriate.[48] Michael Mills notes that the triad envy—indignation—spite is the only one in the *Ethics* in which there are two excesses, and he has suggested that really there ought to be two triads, corresponding respectively to pain at good fortune and joy at bad fortune, as in Figure 3.

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45 *EE* 3.7.1233b19–25: ὁ μὲν φθόνος τὸ λυπεῖσθαι ἐπὶ τοῖς κατ' ἀξίαν εὖ πράττουσιν ἐστίν, τὸ δὲ τοῦ ἐπιχαιρεκάκου πάθος ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ ἀνώνυμον, ἀλλ' ὁ ἔχων δῆλος, ἐπὶ τὸ χαίρειν ταῖς παρὰ τὴν ἀξίαν κακοπραγίαις. μέσος δὲ τούτων ὁ νεμεσητικός, καὶ ὃ ἐκάλουν οἱ ἀρχαῖοι τὴν νέμεσιν, τὸ λυπεῖσθαι μὲν ἐπὶ ταῖς παρὰ τὴν ἀξίαν κακοπραγίαις καὶ εὐπραγίαις, χαίρειν δ' ἐπὶ ταῖς ἀξίαις.

46 *EN* 2.7.1108b1–5: νέμεσις δὲ μεσότης φθόνου καὶ ἐπιχαιρεκακίας, εἰσὶ δὲ περὶ λύπην καὶ ἡδονὴν τὰς ἐπὶ τοῖς συμβαίνουσι τοῖς πέλας γινομένας· ὁ μὲν γὰρ νεμεσητικὸς λυπεῖται ἐπὶ τοῖς ἀναξίως εὖ πράττουσιν, ὁ δὲ φθονερὸς ὑπερβάλλων τοῦτον ἐπὶ πᾶσι λυπεῖται, ὁ δ' ἐπιχαιρέκακος τοσοῦτον ἐλλείπει τοῦ λυπεῖσθαι ὥστε καὶ χαίρειν. Envy and spite are not equivalent to other emotions treated in the ethical works, as they are not means that can be morally good in some measure, but are always vicious (*EN* 2.6.1107a9–12) (Mills 1985, 10; Broadie 1991, 102; Garver 2000, 66).

47 I believe the development of this doctrine (and hence the composition of the ethical works) must postdate the *Rhetoric*, as Aristotle is very unlikely to have avoided all mention of it in the *Rhetoric* if that were a later work. See Irwin 1996, 161–162 for a different view.

48 Grimaldi 1988, 152.

phthoneros —— *nemesêtikos* —— *anônumos*
(envious) (righteously indignant) (unnamed)

epikhairekakos —— *anônumos* —— *anônumos*
(spiteful) (unnamed) (unnamed)

Fig. 3. Source: Mills 1985, 10

The virtuous mean in each triad is the ability to diagnose desert correctly and feel an appropriate amount of pain or pleasure at it, while the excess in each triad is the lack of this ability coupled with feeling pain or pleasure indiscriminately. Ignoring the deficient extremes, which are merely a lack of feeling, we can see in Figure 4 that this formulation gives four emotions that are the envy, indignation, spite, and 'pleasure at deserved misfortune' (PaDM) of the *Rhetoric*:

envy —— indignation —— apathy

spite —— PaDM —— apathy

Fig. 4. The 'corrected' triads

As Mills points out, Aristotle has tried to show how his 'doctrine of the mean' covers rivalrous emotions but, perhaps led astray by so many unnamed emotions, he has mistakenly included one triad too few.[49]

In the *Rhetoric* envy and spite were depicted as emotions that afflict bad people in certain situations. In the *Ethics* they have become paradigms of badness: uncontrolled, excessive feelings by the ethically uneducated of emotions that an ethically aware person would feel more judiciously, and which in that judiciousness would be perfectly acceptable.

4. *Who does, and does not, feel* phthonos?

4.1. *Who feels envy, and when?*

Aristotle says that we feel envy for 'those like ourselves' (2.10.1387b23–24: ἐστὶν ὁ φθόνος λύπη τις ἐπὶ εὐπραγίᾳ φαινομένῃ τῶν εἰρημένων ἀγαθῶν περὶ τοὺς ὁμοίους).[50] People will feel envy towards those who

[49] Mills 1985, 10; see also Urmson 1980, 166–167; Konstan 2006, 115.

[50] Referred to as τοῦ ἴσου καὶ ὁμοίου ('equal and similar') at 2.9.1386b19–20. The

are or appear similar to them in birth, relationship, age, disposition, distinction, or wealth (2.10.1387b25–27: φθονήσουσι μὲν γὰρ οἱ τοιοῦτοι οἷς εἰσί τινες ὅμοιοι ἢ φαίνονται· ὁμοίους δὲ λέγω κατὰ γένος, κατὰ συγγένειαν, καθ' ἡλικίας, κατὰ ἕξεις, κατὰ δόξαν, κατὰ τὰ ὑπάρχοντα), and near them in time, place, age, and reputation (2.10.1388a6: τοῖς γὰρ ἐγγὺς καὶ χρόνῳ καὶ τόπῳ καὶ ἡλικίᾳ καὶ δόξῃ φθονοῦσιν). Additionally people feel envy for kin (e.g. sibling rivalry) and anyone else they are in rivalry with, which will include people who are contemporaries, who live near them, who are not too far above or below them, and who compete for the same things both in sport and in love—and presumably occupation: he quotes the famous line from Hesiod that 'potter envies potter' (2.10.1388a7–17).[51]

People will feel envy when they fall a little short of having all the good things in life (2.10.1387b26). People who do great deeds and have good fortune can also feel *phthonos* (possessive jealousy, see note 8 above), as they think others will try to take something away from them—this includes those honored for a distinction, especially wisdom or happiness (29–30). Ambitious people are more envious than unambitious ones (though this implies the unambitious can be envious too), as are those with a reputation for wisdom, who are ambitious as regards wisdom (possessive jealousy again). In general, anyone wishing to be distinguished in anything can be envious (or jealous) in regard to that thing (31–33). The small-minded (*mikropsukhoi*) are also envious, because everything seems great to them (34). People envy those whose possessions or successes they feel to be a reproach to them (1388a18–21). Those who have lost something, or who never had it, envy those that do have it, as do those who have not got it yet; this includes youth, so older men envy younger, and money, so those who have spent much envy those who have spent little (1388a21–24).[52]

εἰρημένων ἀγαθῶν ('goods already spoken about') are given at 1.5.1360b18–22: good birth, plenty of friends, good friends, wealth, good children, plenty of children, a happy old age, bodily excellences (such as health, beauty, strength, height, athletic prowess), fame, honor, good luck, and virtue. Aristotle says all these things are the product of good fortune, and as such incite envy (1.5.1362a5–6: ὅλως δὲ τὰ τοιαῦτα τῶν ἀγαθῶν ἐστιν ἀπὸ τύχης ἐφ' οἷς ἐστιν ὁ φθόνος).

[51] Hes. *Op.* 25–26: καὶ κεραμεὺς κεραμεῖ κοτέει καὶ τέκτονι τέκτων, καὶ πτωχὸς πτωχῷ φθονέει καὶ ἀοιδὸς ἀοιδῷ ('Potter grudges potter and carpenter, carpenter; beggar envies beggar and bard, bard').

[52] There are some instructive contrasts with *zêlos*. While the small-minded (*mikropsukhoi*) and the old are prone to *phthonos* (2.10.1387b, 2.10.1388a21), the high-minded

In reading the above, it can seem as if almost anyone can envy nearly anyone else for just about anything at all. However, some situations exclude envy, even in the *Rhetoric*. People who are not equal or similar in any of the ways listed will not feel envy for each other. Even being dissimilar in only one respect can preclude envy: e.g. people who live a century apart, or at opposite ends of the Mediterranean, or those far above or below us (2.10.1388a9–12). But for a more detailed analysis of those who will not feel envy, one must look to the *Ethics*, and in particular Aristotle's discussion of virtue and ethical education.

4.2. *The elimination of a* phaulotês

We have already seen that morally good people cannot feel envy, but how does one become morally good? Aristotle believes the human soul is divided into an alogical and a logical half (*EN* 1.13.1102a26–32). The alogical half is the passionate, desiderative part of the soul, the seat of the emotions and bodily desires. However, since emotions are cognitive (i.e. they involve judgment), it is possible for them to be controlled by the logical half of the soul: the alogical half of the soul is (potentially) subordinate to the logical half.[53] Ethics involves training both halves of the soul. As Sarah Broadie notes: 'human virtue, when achieved, is precisely an excellence of reason and feeling in partnership'.[54] Training of the logical half of the soul aims at practical wisdom (*phronêsis*) (*EN* 6.5.1140b25–29). Training of the alogical half aims at moral excellence (*aretê êthikê*), which is brought about by the character (*êthos*) developing the habit (*ethos*) of acting in a certain way (*EN* 2.1.1103a14–17).[55] One cannot truly have either moral excellence or practical wisdom without both being present (*EN* 6.13.1144b30–32).

In order to eliminate envy and spite, one must habituate the alogical half of the soul, which feels emotions based on its training, only to feel pain or pleasure at someone's perceived good or bad fortune when it

(*megalopsukhoi*) and the young will feel emulation (2.11.1388a38–b3). Both *phthonos* (2.10. 1387b26) and *zêlos* (2.11.1388b3–7) can be felt for those who fall short of having all the goods in note 50 above; however the one must be felt by bad people, and the other by good.

[53] Fortenbaugh 2002, 23–27.

[54] Broadie 1991, 64.

[55] *Ibid.* 72; see also Kosman 1980. Aristotle notes the close similarity in the Greek words (*EN* 2.1.1103a17–18); LSJ confirms *êthos* is a lengthened form of *ethos*.

ought to be felt. This habituation is brought about by many influences, e.g. parental upbringing, the influence of society's norms and laws, the scrutiny of peers. By habituation one builds up a kind of mental database of situations in which one has been taught that indignation is a proper response, or that someone has 'got their come-uppance' deservedly. When someone so trained perceives an instance of good or bad fortune, his cognitive response will recognize this fortune and say 'deserved' or 'not deserved' correctly, causing him to feel (or not) pain or pleasure accordingly. This ability is moral excellence, and is the training that a well brought up child might have, or an adult man before starting on a course of ethics.[56]

William Fortenbaugh believes that perfecting the alogical part of the soul is sufficient: since deliberation is not necessary for every individual virtuous response (sometimes there is not sufficient time), practical wisdom is not necessary for a virtuous response to be guaranteed.[57] Richard Sorabji rightly disagrees (see also *EN* 6.13.1144b30–32), but in my view goes too far in the other direction, arguing that deliberation (by the logical half of the soul) is required to find the mean in every instance of ethical emotional response.[58] Fortenbaugh focuses too much on habituation, Sorabji too much on deliberation;[59] the truth is somewhere between the two. Aristotle makes plain that excellence is built through habituation (*EN* 2.1.1103b1–2):

> We become just by doing just acts, temperate by doing temperate acts, brave by doing brave acts.
>
> οὕτω δὴ καὶ τὰ μὲν δίκαια πράττοντες δίκαιοι γινόμεθα, τὰ δὲ σώφρονα σώφρονες, τὰ δ' ἀνδρεῖα ἀνδρεῖοι.[60]

A good upbringing should habituate one to be properly indignant but avoid envy, to feel proper pleasure at others' misfortunes but avoid spite. However, while someone with a good upbringing might hit on the morally correct response repeatedly, there is no guarantee that they will hit on it invariably, since for that to happen they must have true

[56] Smith 1996, 60 notes that, for Aristotle, education in habit must come before education in reason.

[57] Fortenbaugh 2002, 73–75.

[58] Sorabji 1980, 211.

[59] Smith 1996 argues that Fortenbaugh takes a Humean approach, pitting himself against the 'intellectualists', each side stressing either character or intellect has priority in 'determining good moral ends' (58).

[60] Tr. Barnes 1984, 1743.

knowledge of where the mean lies, and that requires practical wisdom and deliberation.

The man who has perfected both his moral excellence and his practical wisdom is *megalopsukhos*—the virtue is *megalopsukhia*[61]—and such a man will not be able to feel envy. Christopher Gill has argued that the *megalopsukhos* should not feel any of the rivalrous emotions covered by chapters 2.9–11, since he has a goodly measure of all appropriate goods and knows what he does not have is unimportant.[62] However, while this might preclude emulation and disdain, and his virtue stops him feeling envy and spite, I see no reason why the *megalopsukhos* might not feel indignation or 'pleasure at deserved misfortune'. Indeed, if he were unable to feel these, he would be practicing the defective vice.

One other context Gill identifies as precluding rivalrous emotions is (perfect) friendship: a friend will only compete with his friend in virtue, and will willingly lose all his possessions, and his life itself if need be, for his friend's sake.[63] However, Gill does not show why a friend will not emulate his friend, and indeed Aristotle states that we will wish someone to be our friend if we want them to emulate but not envy us (2.4.1381b21–23: ὑφ' ὧν ζηλοῦσθαι βούλονται καὶ μὴ φθονεῖσθαι, τούτους ἢ φιλοῦσιν ἢ βούλονται φίλοι εἶναι).

5. *Envy and the Aristotelian orator*

5.1. *Can an orator rouse his audience's envy?*

Those with sufficient virtue never to feel envy (*megalopsukhoi* and perfect friends) are clearly few and far between, and accordingly the vast majority of an orator's listeners will be susceptible to envy. However, the morally bad nature of *phthonos* raises problems that do not apply to other emotions.

Emotion arousal is useful as an oratorical tool because emotions, by application of pain or pleasure through rational argument, affect judgment. In an insightful article, Stephen Leighton has discussed exactly

[61] *Megalopsukhos* is normally translated 'magnanimous' (Barnes 1984 uses 'properly proud'), while *megalopsukhia* is 'magnanimity'. In note 52 above I translated it 'high-minded', to highlight the comparison with 'small-minded' (*mikropsukhos*).

[62] Gill 2003, 36–37.

[63] *Ibid*; this might suggest a 'zero sum' element to rivalry, which I do not believe Aristotle intends.

how judgment can be affected by emotion:[64] it will either be as the consequence of emotion, or as a constituent of emotion. Judgment alteration as a *consequence* of emotion can come about in four ways. The first is by allowing our reason to be overruled (e.g. if we pity someone, we let them off for a crime we know they have committed). Secondly, if we can be brought to favour or disfavour someone, we will be better or worse disposed towards giving them the benefit of the doubt when the situation is ambiguous. Thirdly, through perception: for instance, our strong support for one of two tennis players will affect whether we judge a ball she hit to be in or out. The final way is through strong emotion causing us to give more attention to an issue. Alteration of judgment as a *constituent* of emotion is more complex. It is not that one emotion rules out another, rather that the 'emotions are complexes involving judgments, each complex excluding certain other emotion complexes, their judgments, and certain other judgments as well'.[65] Aristotle gives one, and only one, effect of envy: he says that if an orator can put the jury into an envious state of mind, then his opponent will not be able to win pity from them (see note 20 above). In Leighton's words: 'It is not that envy brings about a change of judgments such that one does not show or feel pity; rather, to be moved to envy involves being moved to a particular set of judgments that excludes those of pity'.[66]

But can an Aristotelian orator make use of this? Another of the three modes of persuasion is character (*êthos*): an orator must make his argument in a way that makes him appear worthy of trust, and it is good men that we trust; a good man's character is demonstrated by what he says, and it is pretty much the most effective means of persuasion available to him.[67] However, since envy is a bad (*phaulon*) emotion, if an orator presents himself as envious of his opponent in trying to rouse similar envy in his audience, he will show his own character to be base. If his character is 'pretty much the most effective means of persuasion' available to him, using envy is not worth that sacrifice. Second, he cannot present himself as *not* envious, but still explicitly attempt to rouse envy in his audience: they will either believe he shares that envy, or that

[64] The remainder of the paragraph summarizes Leighton 1996, 206–217.

[65] *Ibid.* 210.

[66] *Ibid.*

[67] 1.2.1356a4–13: διὰ μὲν οὖν τοῦ ἤθους, ὅταν οὕτω λεχθῇ ὁ λόγος ὥστε ἀξιόπιστον ποιῆσαι τὸν λέγοντα· τοῖς γὰρ ἐπιεικέσι πιστεύομεν μᾶλλον καὶ θᾶττον … δεῖ δὲ καὶ τοῦτο συμβαίνειν διὰ τοῦ λόγου… σχεδὸν ὡς εἰπεῖν κυριωτάτην ἔχει πίστιν τὸ ἦθος.

he does not and is merely spinning sophisms. Worse, by appearing to impute bad character to his audience, he may alienate them.

A third, and more complex, possibility is that the orator might seek to rouse envy in the audience while seeming not to. However, I do not believe this is possible either. First, the audience might spot it, which leads to the problems already mentioned. A more serious objection is that, although rhetoric (like dialectic) is a skill that can be used to argue anything, an Aristotelian student must pursue a life of moral excellence and practical wisdom, and politics is an extension of this ethical life;[68] accordingly an Aristotelian orator must not use unethical arguments, even if they might be rhetorically effective.[69] A fourth explanation also fails: Aristotle cannot be instructing his orator how to deal with envy if it is used against him,[70] because he does not tell him how to counter envy, only that envy can be used to counter pity (2.10.1388a27–30).[71] There are therefore problems with any use the orator might wish to make of envy within the purposes of chapter 2.1—i.e. arousing it in an audience to affect their judgment.

So what use can an Aristotelian orator make of the chapter on envy? Well, first, this chapter has a didactic purpose: if there were no discussion of what envy is and how it differs from indignation and emulation, how could an Aristotelian orator avoid straying from these acceptable emotions to envy? This, I believe, is why Aristotle devotes so much space to telling his orator exactly how one distinguishes these emotions from each other, and why he makes such a point of saying how acceptable and worthy indignation and emulation are, when envy is so immoral. If envy did not exist, Aristotle would have had to invent it.

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68 Schofield 2006.

69 Hesk 2000, 219 says Aristotle believes that rhetoric without moral purpose is merely sophistry. Garver 1994, 8 argues that for Aristotle, rhetoric is an 'integration of thought and character in an art of practical reason', and Fortenbaugh 1991, 97–98 notes that the alliance of excellences of thought and of character, assimilated respectively to the rational and irrational halves of the soul, is what makes someone virtuous (*EN* 1.13.1103a3–10; 2.1.1103a14–15; 6.1.1138b35–1139a1). It should be noted that this argument does not rely on support from within the *Rhetoric*. The balance of scholarly opinion is that the *Rhetoric* itself does contain injunctions to behave ethically: Irwin 1996 argues that 1.1.1355a29ff. should be read in this way; Grimaldi 1972, 19–21 agrees; see also Halliwell 1994; however, see Engberg-Pedersen 1996 for an alternative view.

70 Irwin 1996, 144: Aristotle (1355a29ff.) believes an orator needs to be able to recognize illegitimate arguments when their opponent uses them against him, even if he should not use them himself.

71 Cf. 2.9.1387a3–5 and 2.9.1387b17–21, where he makes a similar comment about indignation.

5.2. *Envy in an orator's opponent*

However, there is something more an Aristotelian student might extract from the *Rhetoric*. There is a second type of rhetorical use for the emotions, including for envy, more acceptable than manipulating an audience, and this is to explain one's opponent's motivation (1.10.1369a15–19).[72] Prosecutors must consider all the motives that can affect defendants, and how many apply to their opponent, while defendants must consider how many do not apply to them (1.10.1368b30–32).

Aristotle argues (1.10.1368b33–1369a6) that all of a person's actions are caused either by the person himself (*di' autous*), or something external to him. The latter comprises things done out of chance or necessity (which itself subdivides into compulsion and nature); the former out of habit or desire (*orexis*). Desire subdivides into rational desire, or will (*boulêsis*), and irrational desire, which further subdivides into appetite (*epithumia*) and anger (*orgê*).[73] In fitting the emotions into these, it would seem that at least all pleasurable emotions are subsumed within appetite: appetite is a desire for pleasure (1.11.1370a18: ἡ γὰρ ἐπιθυμία τοῦ ἡδέος ἐστὶν ὄρεξις). For painful emotions, it is helpful if we recall that anger (*orgê*) is a pain accompanied by a desire for revenge, and that revenge brings pleasure (2.2.1378a30–b2). In fact in general, painful emotions are accompanied by a desire to escape from pain, and that desire will be pleasant (1.10.1369b26–28): hatred is attended by a desire to harm,[74] pity by a desire to aid, envy by a desire to bring low, emulation by a desire to succeed. Thus pleasant feelings are aroused by a desire to act in certain ways, and painful feelings by a desire to act in other ways.[75]

This then is the second use an Aristotelian orator can make of the emotions, and, if the first use is ruled out of court, it is the only use he

[72] It should be noted that Aristotle does not say *phthonos* should be used in this way (let alone *only* in this way). Striker 1996, 288 notes that the idea of emotions being motivational is Platonic.

[73] Leighton 1996, 222–223 notes that in *de An.* 414b2, *MA* 700b22, and *EE* 1223a25–27, this subdivision of desire is *thumos*, or spirit, a name less likely, in the context of the subsequent discussion, to cause confusion with *orgê* as the emotion discussed in *Rh.* 2.2.

[74] Strictly, Aristotle says that hatred, unlike anger, is not painful (2.4.1382a12–13); see Cooper 1996, 247–249 and Leighton 1996, 232–233, n. 14 for discussion of this point.

[75] Viano 2003 also locates pleasures within the *epithumia* and anger within the *thumos*; she argues that the *thumos* is probably also the seat of the competitive emotions. Elster 1999, 60–61 has some interesting comments on emotions and action tendencies in Aristotle.

can make of envy: he can show that his opponent is motivated by it. Either the defendant committed whatever action he committed out of envy in the past, or the prosecutor is prosecuting the defendant out of envy now. We have seen that Aristotle compels the speaker and the audience to remain untainted by the badness of *phthonos*. If the opponent can be shown to be motivated by it, he will therefore be the most evil person in the court. The speaker should win his case by default.

6. *Conclusion*

In this chapter I have shown that *phthonos* is not just one of many emotions similarly treated by Aristotle in the *Rhetoric*, but in fact stands apart from the others because of its badness. Building on work by Ben-Zeʾev, I have proposed a *schema* for understanding how Aristotle systematizes the family of emotions relating to the fortunes of others. In that *schema*, it is explicitly badness that distinguishes *phthonos* from *zêlos*, and a consequence of the badness (being unable to diagnose people's just deserts) that distinguishes *phthonos* from *to nemesan*. In the *Ethics*, Aristotle continues to distinguish bad *phthonos* from good *nemesis* (as he calls it there), but now *phthonos* is not a different emotion to *nemesis*, but the same emotion when felt in excess by the ethically uneducated. Following a brief look at the situations that arouse *phthonos*, I have shown how, through habituating the alogical half of the soul to feel only appropriate indignation and through teaching the logical half of the soul practical wisdom as to justified deserts, one might aspire to be *megalopsukhos*, when one is no longer susceptible to feeling *phthonos* (i.e. excessive *nemesis*). Returning to the *Rhetoric*, I have shown how the badness of *phthonos* renders it unsuitable in every way for direct use in persuading an audience, Aristotle's stated aim—though it can be used to explain an opponent's motivation. An orator can also use the chapter to distinguish *phthonos* clearly from *nemesis* and *zêlos*, thus determining to what extent he can use the latter two emotions to persuade an audience, without damaging his own character and so forfeiting his case.[76]

[76] I should like to thank Ineke Sluiter and Ralph Rosen for the opportunity to participate in the Penn-Leiden conference, and in this volume. I should also like to thank Malcolm Schofield, Bob Sharples, Chris Carey, Jamie Dow, and the anonymous readers for this volume, for their detailed comments on earlier drafts of this chapter.

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CHAPTER ELEVEN

THE DISGRACE OF MATTER IN ANCIENT AESTHETICS

James I. Porter

1. *Introduction*

Mary Douglas points out the striking truth, apparently first enunciated by Palmerston, that dirt is matter out of place.[1] Imagine a fried egg on your plate and now on the floor, a bar of soap in the shower and then in the garden, dirt in the garden and then in your bath tub, your spoon in your mouth and then in mine. What each of these examples illustrates is the fact that dirt is a relative notion. Its qualities are perceived rather than intrinsic, so much so that what counts as dirt will vary from one setting to another. To a child none of the examples named may count as dirty, however much you or I might protest the fact. These examples or others like them might be contested across cultures. The relativity of dirt is thus found at home and abroad. The variations can extend over time and not only across space: what once counted as dirt often no longer does, and vice versa, just as the frameworks for labeling dirt change. Think of the modern specter of microbial pathogens.

In the same essay ('Secular Defilement') Douglas is at pains to elucidate how dirt is 'a residual category, rejected from our normal scheme of classification'.[2] It is rejected because dirt is not something we readily contemplate as an active ingredient of our valuations: dirt, we might say, is itself a dirty category of thought, as abject as dirt itself. To be sure, there is a subtle hypocrisy involved in this stance of ours towards dirt, which does in fact play a steady role in our classifications, even as

[1] Palmerston in Bolton 1904, ch. 16; Douglas 2002, 44 (unattributed, except as 'the old definition'). G.K. Chesterton appears to have adapted the phrase: 'Dirt is matter in the wrong place', in *The New Witness*, January 31, 1919 (thanks to Dale Ahlquist for this reference).

[2] Douglas 2002, 45.

the category of dirt repugns. But mental categories are often more a matter of habit than reflection, and it is far easier to denigrate things than to reflect on the act of denigration as we go about our daily business. Denigration denied is dirt in the mind. On the other hand, all of our classificatory schemes are, in fact, so deeply lodged in our minds and behaviors that bringing them up for inspection is a difficult chore. One might have thought that simply to inspect a category of classification is to bring attention to the fact, and the facticity, of the classification, if not of classification itself. Beauty, we might wish to believe, is best taken in the way one inhales the perfume of a rose, but not when beauty is examined too closely as the product of a system of ideas or habits. So why should we expect the category of dirt to be an exception?

Dirt may not be exceptional at all in this respect. But just as Douglas is moved to ask, 'Can we even examine the filtering mechanism itself?', so too it may be that whenever we bring our filtering categories into view for inspection we risk sullying them, moving them out of their assigned place, and exposing their delicate nerves. To examine a pattern of thought or a value is to concretize a formal abstraction: it materializes a category. Turning something into dirt, then, perceptually speaking, is a way of turning it into matter, regardless of whether the thing in question is beauty, a flower, a poem, or a joke (all these are notoriously hard things to analyze without murdering). Would we say that dirt is *form* out of place; or that it is *abstraction* out of place? It would seem nonsensical to do so. But we can say without absurdity that form and abstraction out of place—placed like an egg on a plate for embarrassing inspection—are these things made material. Matter is the dirtiness of form, and it is visible whenever form's function becomes the object of perception instead of the mechanism that filters and guides perception. So perceived, form becomes palpable and aesthetically apprehensible. This is what the Russian Formalists sought to expose through their revisionary aesthetics during the early part of the twentieth century. (I am thinking especially of Viktor Shklovsky and his associates, who were less formalists than they were materialists, sensualists, and even vitalists.)

Matter and materialism have traditionally been driven into abjection, made into 'a residual category' of their own, and indeed into the locus where all residues must reside, virtually repressed from view. Exactly when the tide turned against philosophical materialism is hard to say, but it would not be wrong to look to Plato as one of the decisive

moments. In this chapter, I will be looking at the moment when matter fell into disgrace in ancient aesthetic thought, and at the ways in which this came about (mainly, in Plato and in Aristotle, though with clear forerunners among some of the Presocratics). I will also be arguing that this turn against matter and materialism in ancient art and aesthetics, which became the canonical filter for reading the ancient traditions, is a distortion of the ancient reality. It also conceals the hidden (suppressed) materiality of beauty in Plato and Aristotle. The chapter will end by hinting at some of the evidence for materialism in ancient aesthetic theory and practices. I hope to show that historically and in every other respect, materialism in aesthetics is capable of bringing out much that non-materialist aesthetics, which is to say, any aesthetics predicated on the suppression—the disgrace—of matter, phenomenality, and sensuousness, fails to notice. Indeed, one of the virtues of the approach I will be recommending is that it calls for a return to the root meaning and, I would argue, root activity of aesthetics and aesthetic perception, namely 'sensuous perception', which can *only* come about through a direct confrontation with matter and materiality in objects of art or in objects viewed—and above all experienced—as art.

2. *From matter and materialism to form and formalism*

Let us begin with the decline of matter, though we can set the scene with the reminder that prior to matter's decline, matter was in a way all there was. Robert Renehan's remarkable article on the origins of the ideas of incorporeality and immateriality in Greek thought does some of this work for us. Unable to locate these ideas before Plato, he concludes that in Homer and in 'the early Greek view of reality' he represents, 'the world and all that was in it was more or less material. There are no immaterial beings. The gods themselves are corporeal and normally anthropomorphic, indeed severely so; they can even be wounded by humans. The souls of the dead are so literally material that an infusion of blood will restore temporarily their wits and vitality', and so on.[3] Art historians like Christos Karusos and Hanna Philipp have corroborated this finding. They speak of an unalloyed 'pleasure in materials' (*Lust am Material*) in the archaic popular tradition (for instance, with ref-

[3] Renehan 1980.

erence to inscriptions, whether votive or funerary).[4] Presocratic thought had been divided between materialism and its opposite. The Ionian pluralists viewed the world as consisting of various kinds of stuff. On the other side stood the Eleatics, such as Parmenides, who denied the existence of the material world and thus paved the way for Plato. Plato's views about the constitution of reality are reflected in his views about art and aesthetics, which subsequently became widespread, though not in the form in which he had initially cast them. When Aristotle came along, he reacted to Plato and modified much of what his teacher had taught him about aesthetics. Even so, a strong Platonic bias is palpable in Aristotle. Both demonstrate a strong reaction to the materiality of art.

Now, the problem with this thumbnail sketch is the ground it leaves out. The leap from the Presocratic giants to the heirs of Socrates is huge, and it presumes there is no ground intervening. Alas, it is a leap that is taken by just about every intellectual and aesthetic history of antiquity. Modern views are still very much shaped by those of Plato and Aristotle, which became canonical even in antiquity, and which we might call idealist or formalist in tendency, inasmuch as they valorized either ideal Forms or formal properties and relations, for instance, design and arrangement. As a result, our views are severely distorted by theirs. Rhys Carpenter's influential study *The Esthetic Basis of Greek Art of the Fifth and Fourth Centuries B.C.* (1921), is still entirely characteristic, for instance in its presumption that fifth-century '"idealism", the "classic restraint", the "omission of non-essentials" … are all traceable to the attempt to put into material guise an almost metaphysical abstraction, a type-form which should satisfy the reason in its quest of perfection and … the supersensual'—in other words, in its exhibition of Platonic Forms. Matter, plainly, is but a transparent and passing guise for ideal forms.[5] It is time for a correction. But before proceeding to one, we need to see just what Plato and Aristotle are really up to, and also to situate them better historically. They are not the beginning of aesthetic inquiry in antiquity by any means. They are merely one of its more prominent *derailing* moments.

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[4] Quotation from Philipp 1968, 24; cf. *ibid.*, 5–20. See Karusos 1972 [1941] esp. 92–93: 'Beauty cannot be severed from the material, nor can it be understood as a separate feature of the work'.

[5] Carpenter 1959, 95. Cf. *ibid.* 108.

3. *Plato's formalism*

While we are in the mood of reductionism, let us call Plato and Aristotle *formalists*. Formalism is a tricky category. In one sense, it can be said to consist in the abstraction of categories and structures or aspectual distinctions that exist separately only in the mind but not in the concrete work of art (for example, form, content, matter, or appearance), which in turn supply criteria for the analysis and often for determining the essence of art and, accordingly, its value. In this light, materialism would count as a kind of formalism. In its more common use, formalism is the promotion of form over content. What this means for Plato is that poetry is effectively all form, and illegitimately at that. Poetry is a travesty of true and original form, which has a metaphysical grounding beyond the material world.

Aristotle's reply, in his *Poetics*, is that all that matters in tragedy, which for him is the consummate poetic genre, is its rational form, namely the unfolding action of a play (the *muthos*) in its internal logical unity and consistency (its formal and final causes). Plato's complaints against poetry's harmfulness are thus neutralized. But Aristotle nonetheless remains a formalist. And what he further shares with Plato is a basic hostility to art's *material* causes, which is to say, the sensuous dimensions of art and poetry.

Plato singles out, so as to restrict, the expressive elements of verbal artworks (rhythm, harmony [that is, mode or tuning], and movement), as for instance in *Republic* 3, where he discusses two kinds of expression, one in which 'variations' (μεταβολάς), the 'mode' (ἁρμονίαν) and 'rhythm' are 'small', and the other which displays 'manifold forms of variations'.[6] Plato's preference is plainly for the first performer, the 'correct speaker' with the more restricted range of expressive possibilities. *Mimêsis*, and by extension all forms of art, must be as 'unmixed' (ἄκρατον) as possible.[7] By this, he means that *mimêsis* must be uncontaminated by plurality and modality, change and alteration, shapeshifting, and plurivocality (in every sense of the word: multiplicity of meaning and polyphony as well). Colors and shapes are a bedazzlement to the senses and a distraction from the harder, cooler lines of truth, as he says elsewhere.[8]

[6] *R.* 3.397b6–c6; tr. Russell, adapted. Cf. *R.* 3.399e8–10.
[7] *R.* 3.397d5.
[8] *R.* 10.601a4–b8.

The phenomenal and sensual aspects of art are like so many lures and distractions. Once these are stripped away, art uninformed by philosophy stands nakedly revealed and empty-handed. It has nothing to show, no beauty and no attractions: there is nothing left to see, or worth seeing. Philosophically informed art does not need the distractions of the sensual to reveal its beauties: they shine through for what they are. What is more, the allurements of the sensual are intrinsically dangerous. For that reason, they are not only unnecessary but also unwanted.[9]

That is why in Book 3 of the *Republic* Plato insists on an austere standard of purity in art. Not only are Homer and the other canonical poets banished from Callipolis, the ideal city, but dirges and other songs of lamentation must also be eliminated. Only the severe Dorian and Phrygian modes survive this triage. Multi-stringed instruments and all polyharmony must likewise go, along with their kindred spirit among the wind instruments, the *aulos* (being 'the most "many-stringed" of all', presumably because it is capable of the greatest number of tonal inflections),[10] leaving the simpler lyre and the cithara, and the shepherd's pipe. Then Socrates pauses: 'By the dog, without being aware of it, we've been purifying (διακαθαίροντες) the city we recently said was luxurious'. 'That's because we're being moderate'. 'Then let's purify (καθαιρῶμεν) the rest'. He then turns to regulations on rhythm and meter, paralleling those that were established to govern modes and the rest.[11]

Plato's word choice, *purify*, is not haphazard. It is an essential component of his aesthetics, which is an aesthetics of rigorous and austere limits, indeed an aesthetics of purity. And that is virtually an oxymoron, because it presses the question of just how so narrow a range of objects and features could ever deliver an aesthetic experience at all. Platonic aesthetics is a minimal aesthetics. It is grounded in the most intense perception of the least amount of variability and fluctuation (or becoming) and in the greatest degree of changeless, unwavering, and unadulterated essences. As a consequence, it is unfriendly to the senses: it strives for an apprehension that is least contaminated by sensory interference. Matter and the body must be removed from view to

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[9] Cf. *Phd.* 100d (quoted at n. 21, below); and *Smp.* 211e (at n. 22, below).

[10] Cf. P. *P.* 12.23, where the *aulos* is said to produce a 'many-headed strain' (κεφαλᾶν πολλᾶν νόμον). Plato's strictures against the *aulos* are more comprehensible when read against the cultural history of the instrument, on which see Wilson 2003.

[11] *R.* 399e–400a; tr. Grube/Reeve.

the greatest possible extent so that Being in its translucent essence can shine through most purely, untarnished and untainted.

The tendency of the *Republic* is even more pronounced in the *Philebus*, which is thought to be one of Plato's last works, and which contains one of his richest aesthetic (or rather, anti-aesthetic) reflections.[12] There he develops a notion of 'unmixed pleasures'—pleasures which are 'true', and which contain nothing of their opposite (pain), but which obtain only under limited and limiting circumstances. Unmixed pleasures arise in the face of 'so-called' beautiful shapes and colors and other sensible properties, by which Plato understands those of '*neither living creatures nor of paintings*' (a rather firm demarcation!) but rather of geometrical figures—for instance, lines, circles, plane figures generally, and solids, drawn with mathematical precision and by instrument, or else (the color he names) whiteness, which is to say, not only the color but its essence, pure white, namely the very whiteness of whiteness, or else whiteness *in its whiteness*.[13] (Presumably, Plato would have approved of Hegel, who took the next logical step and freed color from its physical conditions to the fullest possible extent, 'dematerializing' it, and reducing it to its minimal precondition, that of pure, disembodied, and colorless *light*.)[14] Plato also names 'smooth and bright-clear sounds' heard singly as individual notes and 'issuing forth a single pure *melos*' untrammeled by harmonies, relations, or aural decay.[15] None of these things is 'beautiful relative to anything else (πρός τι), as other things are, but they are forever beautiful in and of themselves (καθ' αὑτά) by their very nature, and they are possessed of proper pleasures'. Such pleasures are, like their objects, 'pure' (καθαραί), in contrast to all others, which are 'impure' (ἀκάθαρτοι). By 'all others' we may understand phenomenal pleasures, because Plato's pleasures here are *barely* phenomenal, and indeed they are more akin to the pleasures of learning than to any-

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[12] *Phlb.* 50d–53c.

[13] *Phlb.* 53a–b, pursuing the question, 'What would *purity of whiteness* be in our terms?' (πῶς οὖν ἂν λευκοῦ καὶ τίς καθαρότης ἡμῖν εἴη;).

[14] Hegel 1975, 2:810. See Platnauer 1921, 156; Sorabji 1972, 294. Cf. Schuhl's apt phrase for Plato's vision in the *Phaedrus* of a 'paysage immatériel … baigné d'une pure lumière'. The allusion is to *Phdr.* 250b–c, esp. the words ἐν αὐγῇ καθαρᾷ, where a final revelation of Beauty is described: 'pure was that light that shone around us', etc. Cf. also *R.* 6.507b9–508b4, in praise of light, which makes sight 'the most sunlike of the senses'. We might note that *leukos* in Greek denotes 'shining', 'bright', or 'pale', which is to say, it singles out brilliance more than saturation and hue and thus already points ahead to Hegel's insight into the properties of light.

[15] *Phlb.* 51d.

thing else.[16] Their object, after all, is eternal. They are beautiful, but only in a manner of speaking (τὰ καλὰ λεγόμενα).[17] They are glimpses of Forms.[18]

They are glimpses of Forms, and not only of formalist aesthetic objects, which is why the following comment on the passage is misleading: 'As an aesthetician Plato favors non-objective art; he would enjoy the work of Mondrian or Bauer'.[19] This cannot be right. Paintings are explicitly ruled out by Plato, as we just saw.[20] But Plato's objection is aimed not only at paintings, but at *paint*. Elsewhere, in the *Phaedo*, he scoffs at 'bright color, shape, or any such thing', all of which he finds 'confusing'.[21] And he betrays a similar antipathy in the *Symposium*, where he speaks of 'the Beautiful itself, absolute, pure, unmixed, not polluted by human flesh or colors or any other great nonsense of mortality'.[22] Rather, Plato would have approved of the fetching prospect of Goethe's neoclassical 'Altar of Good Fortune' in his garden

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[16] *Phlb.* 49e7. 'Barely', but still clinging, nonetheless, to a phenomenal 'skin', which they cannot ever quite shed. Does Plato ever really *want* them to shed their ties to materiality? His erotic investment in Forms, which goes beyond protreptic seduction, speaks against this possibility, at least in places. See Carpenter 1959, 107 and Morgan 2000, 182–184 on this stubborn persistence. And see the acute remark by Merleau-Ponty 1964, 200: 'Disons seulement que l'idéalité pure n'est pas elle-même sans chair ni délivrée des structures d'horizon: elle en vit, quoiqu'il s'agisse d'un autre chair et d'autres horizons. C'est comme si la visibilité qui anime le monde sensible émigrait, *non pas hors de tout corps, mais dans un autre corps* moins lourd, plus transparent, comme si elle changeait de chair, abandonnant celle du corps pour celle du langage, et affranchie par là, *mais non délivrée, de toute condition*' (emphasis added). It is in their ambivalence to matter—attaching themselves to it while also straining to break free from it—that ideals attain their own degree of (material) sublimity. See below.

[17] *Phlb.* 51b3.

[18] So, too (or nearly so), Schuhl 1952, 42–43. The question whether Plato in this late dialogue is still contemplating Forms is fraught, and the literature is divided. Geometrical shapes are said to be divine at 62a–b, and much else besides points to a source of knowledge and truth that exceeds human limits, which is all that 'glimpses' here needs indicate.

[19] Davidson 1990, 378.

[20] *Phlb.* 51c3: 'neither living creatures nor paintings'.

[21] *Phd.* 100d; tr. Grube. Cf. *ibid.* 79c for closely similar language used to depict the material world of the senses.

[22] *Smp.* 211e; tr. Nehamas and Woodruff. Plato's language (αὐτὸ τὸ καλὸν ἰδεῖν εἰλικρινές, καθαρόν, ἄμεικτον) may well be inflected with Anaxagorean attributes of Mind, which is said to be 'mixed with nothing' (or 'with no matter' or 'appearances': μέμεικται οὐδενὶ χρήματι 59B1 DK; [see Rivier 1956, 59 at n. 3]), 'the finest of all things and the purest' (λεπτότατόν τε … καὶ καθαρώτατον), and 'all alone by itself' (μόνος αὐτὸς ἐφ' ἑαυτοῦ ἐστιν) (B14 = Simplic. *in Phys.* 164.24; tr. Kirk–Raven–Schofield).

at Weimar, which consisted of a plain stone cube and a plain stone sphere.[23] The *Timaeus* essentially confirms this.[24]

Plato has other ways of attacking the substance of art, in particular poetry. Here, he creates what we might today call a form/content distinction, though on closer inspection the division amounts to something like a matter/content distinction, or if one prefers, one between appearances and value or truth. (Plato will, of course, nullify both halves of the distinction whenever poets are at issue.) A case in point is to be found in the *Ion*, where Socrates claims to envy the lot of rhapsodes, who dress up in fancy robes and 'look as handsome as possible' in order to occupy themselves with the finest of poets, 'and Homer above all, the best and divinest of all, and [in this way rhapsodes] learn not only his words (τὰ ἔπη) but his meaning (τὴν διάνοιαν)'.[25] By 'words' (or 'verses') Plato plainly has in mind not only the text of Homer learned by rote and reproduced 'mindlessly' by rhapsodes in performance, but also the aesthetic qualities of the verses, such as harmony and rhythm, which are irrelevant to the core meanings of the poetry and do not carry over in the course of their being rendered into prose—the very features of verse that make it a perfect conduit for inspiration and possession (its 'pretty face', as Plato puts it in *Republic* 10).[26]

What Plato says of epic poets also applies to lyric poets, because 'every individual poet can only compose well what the Muse has set him to do': 'Just as Corybantic dancers perform when they are not in their right mind, so the lyric poets compose these beautiful songs when they are not in their right mind (οὐκ ἔμφρονες); once involved in harmony and rhythm, they are in a state of possession'.[27] When Plato says that poets are possessed and 'not in their right mind', we need to understand this in a quite literal sense: because the god has 'taken away their mind' (their νοῦς), the poets have not got a thought in their heads, which are instead filled with rhythmic impulses flowing from a divine source that lies beyond all art (τέχνη) and about which they are helpless

[23] Cf. Murdoch 1978, 16, likewise, and interestingly, ruling out the paintings of Mondrian and Ben Nicholson, 'which might be thought of as meeting [Plato's] requirements'.

[24] See *Ti.* 33b–34b on the formal perfections of the sphere, and the rest of the dialogue on other basic geometrical solids.

[25] *Ion* 530b–c; tr. Russell.

[26] *R.* 10.601b6.

[27] *Ion* 534c2–3; 533e8–534a1.

to comment intelligently (whence Ion's hapless condition).[28] They are all form (or performance, or appearance) and no content. Their only modality is one of *aisthêsis*: '[they] are keenly aware (αἰσθάνονται ὀξέως) only of the tune (τοῦ μέλους) that belongs to the god'.[29] Or so Plato would have us believe. Plato's reduction and dismissal of the two components of poetry, its words and its music, is extreme and parodic. His gesture no doubt builds on earlier developments in the critical traditions both among the sophists (Gorgias and his pupil Licymnius spring to mind), but also among the poets and the musicians themselves. In driving a wedge between meaning and its trappings as Plato does, Plato need not be innovating—that conceptual division was doubtless achieved earlier. He is merely radicalizing and in a sense emptying out those earlier gestures, leaving poets and critics alike with next to nothing to work with, and above all with no positive motivations for wishing to do so.

4. *Aristotle on beauty*

Like Plato, Aristotle tends to scant the material, sensuous, and phenomenal aspects of poetry (song, dance, spectacle, meter, language [*lexis*]). Unlike Plato, he favors poetry's formal and discursive aspects: action, character (as revelatory of action, being functionally subordinated to action as it is), thought, as revelatory of character—but *not* as revelatory of poetic 'meaning', let alone of the poet's meaning, neither of which has any relevance for Aristotle. For Aristotle, poetry's 'content' just is its final form, but it is *nothing other than* this final form: take away the form of a tragedy, and nothing will be left over.

Aristotle's theory of poetry seems to imply a more general theory of aesthetics. Does it? I want to suggest that it does, one we would not be far off the mark in calling formalist, not materialist—with the caveat that nothing strictly corresponds to 'form' in his treatise, and that the label is, as it were, more for our benefit than it is for Aristotle's.[30] On this interpretation of the work, tragedy seems to offer the most auspi-

28 *Ion* 534c8; 533d–534c.

29 *Ion* 536c2. Strictly, Corybants are meant, but poets are included by analogy.

30 In defense of the label, one could always invoke the parallelism between tragedy's essence (οὐσία) and the equivalence of essence and εἶδος (form) in other of his writings, e.g., *Metaph.* Z.

cious conditions for fulfilling the aesthetic experience of poetry: here, poetry (standing in for the conditions of art generally, or exemplarily) can be experienced in its purest and most concentrated form.[31]

Whence the focus on formal unity, but also its surveyability—the one pertaining to the object, the other to its apprehension by us (the beholder's share). But in establishing these conditions, Aristotle occasionally crosses the line that would divide poetry from aesthetic objects generally. The criterion of excellence in both—which is to say, beauty—is the criterion of a successful aesthetic *experience*. Consider the following from chapter 7 of the *Poetics (Po.* 7.1450b34–1451a6):

> [It is not enough for *beauty* that a thing, whether an animal or anything else composed of parts, should have those parts well ordered; the thing must also have amplitude—and not just any amplitude.] For *beauty* consists in amplitude as well as in order, which is why a very small creature could not be *beautiful*, since our view loses all distinctness when it comes near to *taking no perceptible time*, and an enormously ample one could not be beautiful either, since our view of it is not simultaneous, so that we lose the sense of its unity and wholeness as we look it over; imagine, for instance, an animal a thousand miles long. Animate and inanimate bodies, then, must have amplitude, but no more than can be taken in at one view; and similarly a plot must have extension, but no more than can be easily remembered (tr. Hubbard, adapted; italics added).

> τὸ γὰρ καλὸν ἐν μεγέθει καὶ τάξει ἐστίν, διὸ οὔτε πάμμικρον ἄν τι γένοιτο καλὸν ζῷον (συγχεῖται γὰρ ἡ θεωρία ἐγγὺς τοῦ ἀναισθήτου χρόνου γινομένη) οὔτε παμμέγεθες (οὐ γὰρ ἅμα ἡ θεωρία γίνεται ἀλλ' οἴχεται τοῖς θεωροῦσι τὸ ἓν καὶ τὸ ὅλον ἐκ τῆς θεωρίας) οἷον εἰ μυρίων σταδίων εἴη ζῷον· ὥστε δεῖ καθάπερ ἐπὶ τῶν σωμάτων καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν ζῴων ἔχειν μὲν μέγεθος, τοῦτο δὲ εὐσύνοπτον εἶναι, οὕτω καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν μύθων ἔχειν μὲν μῆκος, τοῦτο δὲ εὐμνημόνευτον εἶναι.

Aristotle here is a far cry from repeating Plato's analogy between the literary whole and an organic totality (an animal, a ζῷον, with a beginning, middle, and end).[32] Much as Aristotle subscribes to this notion of the objective totality of a work of art, here his interest lies in the modalities of aesthetic *appearances*—not unity and wholeness, but these qualities as they exist in the eye and mind of the beholder.

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[31] See *Po.* 26; 'more concentrated' (ἀθροώτερον): *ibid*, 1462b1. An extreme, if somewhat controversial, reading of what Aristotle calls tragedy's 'proper pleasure' is to be found in Else 1938, 194, who takes this pleasure to be 'proper to any serious literary work which has a pure and perfect form', without restricting the reference to tragedy. Further, 'tragedy does not produce a different pleasure from the epic, but the same pleasure in purer and more concentrated form' (*ibid.* 195). This is essentially correct.

[32] *Phdr.* 264c.

Nor is this all. Aristotle's conception of beauty in this passage seems to include *two* distinct but equally necessary perceptions. There is the perception of the object, and there is the perception of the time it takes to perceive the object. This latter element is crucial: the time of an aesthetic perception must *itself* be aesthetically perceptible, *aisthêtos*. If a perceptual object requires no perceptible time to be taken in, the aesthetic perception as a whole, Aristotle says, will be marred. *Beauty*, in other words, *cannot be glimpsed*: it must be perceived, and it must be perceived *as such*, almost in a second-order fashion. That is, beauty must be the object, if not of a glimpse, then at least of a self-contained *look* with a certain, palpable amplitude. And yet, Aristotle insists, stretch the look beyond the boundaries of a manageable, eusynoptic totality, and the conditions of beauty will be spoiled once again, this time in the other direction. If we sense here an argument against Plato, we are probably not far wrong. Indeed, as if making a *reductio ad absurdum* of the analogy to organic wholes in Plato, Aristotle adds, with a kind of petulancy that is rare, 'imagine, for instance, an animal a thousand miles long!', the point being a good one: in itself, symmetrical totality—the mutual correspondence of parts within a self-enclosed whole—is insufficient to render an object aesthetic (that is, the object of aesthetic perception and experience).

Aristotle, to be sure, has a long list of additional features that render a tragedy aesthetic, or rather a consummate instantiation of its genre, and these have to do with its conditions of intelligibility (the logical interweaving of probability and necessity in the plot) and its fulfillment of its proper end. But here he is concerned with *beauty* (*to kalon*).[33] The term *kalos* (the noun or adjective) appears twenty times in the *Poetics*, but only six or (doubtfully) seven of these occurrences have a narrowly aesthetic meaning, as opposed to their being used in a normative sense (for example, as applied to a 'well-' or 'better-made' tragedy). Three of these 'aesthetic' uses appear in the passage just quoted. Of the rest, two occur in the context of painting. The sixth occurrence is in chapter 22, where it has to do with the aesthetic quality of a verse: its contrasting quality is being εὐτελές 'tawdry' or 'unimpressive.'[34] The last is overwhelmingly sociological: καλὰς πράξεις, 'noble [that is, fine] actions'. Plainly, some other consideration than Aristotle's operative

[33] Which would go far to account for the far greater complexity of this definition of *eusynoptic* as compared with that offered in *Rh.* 3.9 (1409b1) or *Rh.* 3.12 (1414a12).

[34] *Po.* 22.1458b21.

model in the remainder of the treatise is at work here in chapter 7.[35] Elsewhere, Aristotle's overriding concern is with tragedy's conditions of intelligibility, as linked with its formal organization (its plot or *muthos*), but never with its beauty, as here. Indeed, the overall absence of any concern for beauty in the *Poetics*, with the one concentrated exception of the present passage, is striking—and something of an anomaly in the history of Greek aesthetic thought. To put the matter most simply, *tragedies are not essentially beautiful for Aristotle.* Beauty is not part of their final goal, let alone part of their definition.

And yet, given this passage from chapter 7 of the *Poetics*, we would nonetheless have to say that tragedies *are* in some basic sense beautiful even for Aristotle: they fulfill all the conditions of the aesthetic experience outlined there. It is just that tragedies must do all of this and much more; and this 'much more' is what gives them their distinctive and essential quality. Thus, the passage from chapter 7 is interesting precisely because it brings to the fore a more general set of aesthetic criteria, one that we can assume underlies all perceptions of beauty in Aristotle's eyes. Those criteria are in keeping with another key pronouncement by Aristotle, this time from the *Metaphysics*, where he singles out 'order, symmetry, and definiteness' as the three main constituents of beauty.[36] But while it is consistent with this somewhat traditional definition of beauty from the *Metaphysics* (traditional, to judge from the evidence of Polyclitus and from Plato),[37] the passage from the *Poetics* spells out a far more demanding standard of beauty, one that involves time, perception, considerations of dimension and of the relativity of dimension to time and to perception.[38]

5. *Aristotle's formalism*

The concession to beauty in chapter 7 is nonetheless brief and out of character given the general tenor of the *Poetics*, and Aristotle quickly retreats from his momentary phenomenalism in order to reassert the

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[35] This difference escapes Halliwell 1986, 97–99, who is concerned only with conditions of intelligibility in the passage.

[36] *Metaph.* M 3.1078b1–5; tr. Barnes.

[37] Pl. *Sph.* 235e–236a; *Ti.* 87cd; *Phlb.* 64e–65a.

[38] Indeed, in rejecting the sufficiency of order (τάξις) as a criterion of beauty, the *Poetics* passage supersedes the *Metaphysics* passage. Symmetry has no clear place in the *Poetics* passage, while definiteness is being given a clearer meaning.

priority of the true essence of tragedy *qua* art (τέχνη) over its realization in 'performances' (ἀγῶνας) and 'perception' (αἴσθησιν) on the stage—indeed, he does so in the very next breath in the same chapter. What Aristotle is observing is in fact a tension between the demands of performance on stage on the one hand and the formal demands of 'the art itself' or else—what amounts to the same thing—what he calls 'the very nature of the matter' (τοῦ πράγματος), which is to say the plot, on the other.[39] The latter criteria are not fundamentally determined with an eye to their being taken in by the senses, but only with a view to their being understood intellectually and remembered: hence, they must be 'clear' (σύνδηλος) and 'easily remembered' (εὐμνημόνευτον), and the like. Aesthetics is not 'aesthetic' for Aristotle, at least not in the initial sense of 'sensuous perception' that I am trying to establish here.[40]

The mere separation, in theory, of the material and formal causes of poetry is itself a formalistic gesture. *Formalism consists in this very abstraction.* In a word, Aristotle's *Poetics* is operating a form/matter division. It defines the formal 'essence' (οὐσία) of tragedy (the *sunthesis* of actions or events) over against its 'matter' (spectacle [which includes movement, gesture, and dance], song, diction, the *sunthesis* of meters). And in doing so, it disgraces matter.

6. *Objections to Aristotle*

The radical, but also anomalous, nature of Aristotle's value system needs to be underscored. In a way, he has virtually turned his face against Greek culture, and not only the reality of the phenomenon he has set out to analyze. 'Th[e] musical element', placed at the bottom of the scale by Aristotle, 'was by no means merely incidental to classical drama, but an important factor in its total impact'.[41] Less politely,

39 Arist. *Po.* 7.1451a6–15.

40 See also Else 1957, 295, n. 31: 'One factor, undoubtedly, is his tendency to equate aesthetic experience with αἴσθησις, which he has ruled out (a7) as a serious criterion'. Cf. Grassi 1962, 141, for a different explanation of this deficiency (one I find dubious): the kind of beauty described briefly in *Po.* ch. 7 is fundamentally architectural, not poetic, a 'rendering palpable of ontological beauty, which cannot be given in [poetic] art'.

41 West 1992, 17, with some telling ancient anecdotes to back up his point, which looks to be leveled against Aristotle, even if Aristotle is not mentioned by name.

'ancient Greek theater was a fundamentally musical experience', which is to say that music was fully integrated into every aspect of drama, right down to 'the rhythmical and musical quality' of spoken dialogue.[42] Not even the conservative reaction to the New Music at the end of the fifth century could justify Aristotle's demotion of music in tragedy: the usual response, first audible in Old Comedy, was to pine nostalgically for the purer, morally upright music of the classical era and to bemoan the decadent hedonism of the musical present.[43] I suspect that Aristotle is laboring, rather, under the influence of Plato's aesthetic and metaphysical purism, while the very reactionary stance of both suggests, *e contrario*, the existence of opposed strands of aesthetic thinking in the period leading up to the fourth century.

Plato is himself a first-rate witness to these opposed strands, as for instance in his *Hippias Major*, in a passage resisting the intuitive claim, to which Hippias readily assents, that 'beauty [or 'the fine', τὸ καλόν] is what is pleasant (ἡδύ) through hearing and sight' (Pl. *Hp.Ma.* 297e5–298b1):

> 'If whatever makes us be glad, not with all the pleasures, but just through hearing and sight—if we call *that* fine (καλόν), how do you suppose we'd do in the contest? Men, when they're fine anyway—and everything decorative, pictures and sculptures—these all delight us when we see them, if they're fine. Fine sounds and music altogether, and speeches and storytelling have the same effect …'
>
> 'This time, Socrates, I think what the fine is has been well said'. (tr. Woodruff)
>
> ΣΩ. εἰ ὃ ἂν χαίρειν ἡμᾶς ποιῇ, μήτι πάσας τὰς ἡδονάς, ἀλλ' ὃ ἂν διὰ τῆς ἀκοῆς καὶ τῆς ὄψεως, τοῦτο φαῖμεν εἶναι καλόν, πῶς τι ἂρ' ἂν ἀγωνιζοίμεθα; οἵ τέ γέ που καλοὶ ἄνθρωποι, ὦ Ἱππία, καὶ τὰ ποικίλματα πάντα καὶ τὰ ζωγραφήματα καὶ τὰ πλάσματα τέρπει ἡμᾶς ὁρῶντας, ἃ ἂν καλὰ ᾖ· καὶ οἱ φθόγγοι οἱ καλοὶ καὶ ἡ μουσικὴ σύμπασα καὶ οἱ λόγοι καὶ αἱ μυθολογίαι ταὐτὸν τοῦτο ἐργάζονται, ὥστ' εἰ ἀποκριναίμεθα τῷ θρασεῖ ἐκείνῳ ἀνθρώπῳ ὅτι Ὦ γενναῖε, τὸ καλόν ἐστι τὸ δι' ἀκοῆς τε καὶ δι' ὄψεως ἡδύ, οὐκ ἂν οἴει αὐτὸν τοῦ θράσους ἐπίσχοιμεν;
>
> ΙΠ. Ἐμοὶ γοῦν δοκεῖ νῦν γε, ὦ Σώκρατες, εὖ λέγεσθαι τὸ καλὸν ὃ ἔστιν.

[42] Wilson 2002, 39 and *passim*. It is noteworthy that even on this point Aristotle sought to minimize the presence of music, stressing that the spoken parts of tragedy in iambics were closer to everyday speech (*Po.* 22.1459a11–13). For the contrasting view, see D.H. *Comp.* 11 on 'the melody of spoken language'.

[43] Ar. *Av.* 1373–1409 (attacking Cinesias), *Ran. passim* (favoring Aeschylus and lambasting Euripides); Pl. *Lg.* 669c–670a, 700a–701b; Ath. 632a–b = Aristox. fr. 124 Wehrli; [Plut.] *De mus.* 1141C–1142B. Further, West 1992, 369–372; Franklin 2002 (for revision-

Such clues to preexisting counter-views are strong, but they are admittedly not the same as treatises in sensualist aesthetics, which sadly have not survived, assuming anyone ever thought to write them to begin with. There are hints from the remains of the Presocratics which suggest that some philosophers did experiment in writings, or at least comments, of this sort. And some of the sophists are likewise good candidates for literature in the same vein, for instance Hippias himself. But in case the simple existence of the tragedies and the few tatters of their surviving scores are not enough to contradict Aristotle's verdict, which has become nearly canonical (even despite Nietzsche's valiant plea that we attend to the totality of the tragic experience in all its sensuous fullness), we can, thankfully, turn to a handful of later texts for counterarguments.

One of these is the anonymous *Life of Aeschylus*, which credits Aeschylus with innovations in the very same areas that Aristotle abhors (*Vit. Aesch.* 333.6–11 Page):

> Aeschylus was the first to enhance tragedy with highly heroic effects and to decorate the stage and to astound his audience's eyes (τὴν ὄψιν) with splendor, through pictures (γραφαῖς) and devices (μηχαναῖς), with altars and tombs, trumpets, phantoms (εἰδώλοις) and Furies. He equipped the actors with gloves and dignified them with long robes and elevated their stance with higher buskins (tr. Lefkowitz 1981, 159; adapted).[44]
>
> πρῶτος Αἰσχύλος πάθεσι γενικωτάτοις τὴν τραγῳδίαν ηὔξησε, τήν τε σκηνὴν ἐκόσμησε καὶ τὴν ὄψιν τῶν θεωμένων κατέπληξε τῇ λαμπρότητι, γραφαῖς καὶ μηχαναῖς, βωμοῖς τε καὶ τάφοις, σάλπιγξιν, εἰδώλοις, Ἐρινύσι, τούς τε ὑποκριτὰς †χειρὶ σκεπάσας καὶ τῷ σύρματι ἐξογκώσας, μείζοσί τε τοῖς κοθόρνοις μετεωρίσας.

Though of late date, the *Life* is in fact derived from earlier material, some of it from Aristophanes' play *Frogs*, and some of it from Aeschylean dramaturgy itself and inferred from the plays.[45] Evidently, for ancient audiences and *pace* Aristotle, 'being present at a tragedy [was] "an outstanding aural and visual experience" ', as Plutarch would

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ist arguments, and the useful reminder that Aristophanes was guilty of New Musical indulgences himself).

[44] Cf. *ibid.* 332.4–5: 'He used visual effects (τοῖς ὄψεσι) and plots (καὶ τοῖς μύθοις) more to frighten and amaze than to trick his audience', a comment that seems to be aware of its transgression of Aristotelian canons of judgment in its balancing out the two halves of the criteria—though it is just possible that *opsis* and *muthos* were contrasted already prior to Aristotle; see below.

[45] See Lefkowitz 1981, 73–74.

later confirm.[46] Quintilian is of the same opinion. In a section on *hupokrisis*, or delivery, he writes that 'productions [of stage actors] give us infinitely (*infinito*) more pleasure when heard than when read, and at the same time they secure an audience even for some of the poorest, so that authors for whom the libraries have no room may often find a place on the stage'.[47] So much for tragedy by the book, whether in one's study or in a library! Even Aristarchus, whose general Peripatetic leanings are beyond doubt, strays from the party line: he wrote a treatise comparing tragic, comic, and satiric forms of *dance*.[48]

The next text to contradict Aristotle happens to be by Michael Psellus or some other Byzantine author, though its first editor, Robert Browning, detects in it 'the débris of Hellenistic literary theory'.[49] Nonetheless, it is quite likely that the substance of some of the views expressed in the treatise reach back further still, even if its rhetoric has been shaped in response to Aristotle, as we shall see, and even if the treatise is in other ways typical of the Byzantine revival of materialist aesthetics that can be found elsewhere, including in Psellus himself.[50] The treatise bears the title *On Tragedy*, and as this implies its aim is to define the nature and essentials of tragedy. A mere eighty-odd lines long, it is a kind of *Poetics* in miniature. But from the word go, its polemical stance towards Aristotle is, or ought to be, as obvious as are its debts to that philosopher. Shadowing the ideas of the *Poetics*, *On Tragedy* subtly erodes them as well.

This is evident from the opening cascade of tragedy's elements, the means by which tragedy performs its two mimetic functions, the imitation of 'sufferings' and of 'actions': plot, thought, *lexis*, meter, rhythm, song, 'and then in addition to these', spectacle, staging, *topoi* (a word of

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46 Plut. *Mor.* 348c; Hall 1996, 297.

47 Quint. 11.3.4; tr. Russell.

48 Frr. 103–112 Wehrli. The treatise is variously titled according to the ancient sources (*On Choruses, On Tragic Dancing, Comparisons*). Perhaps Aristarchus felt two conflicting impulses here: Peripatetic literary history would have dictated his interest in the chorus, while Aristotle's theory of poetics would have discouraged it.

49 Browning 1963, 68, without specifying which theory he has in mind. One suspects this is a mere guess based on Browning's disbelief that the ideas expressed in the treatise could have originated prior to Aristotle. Perusino 1993, who reedited the papyrus, for the most part follows Browning but takes no stand on this particular question, though he does note that the bulk of the author's views go beyond Aristotle's in various ways (cf. 'superamento': *ibid.* 18).

50 A point confirmed for me by Stratis Papaioannou (private communication). Papaioannou is preparing a new study of Psellus' aesthetic theories in which some of this will come to light (Papaioannou forthcoming).

disputed meaning), and movements. The list ought to raise eyebrows: Aristotle's original six constitutive elements have been expanded into ten. 'The classification here is more detailed, and presumably later'. So the editor, who adds, in desperation: 'A possible ultimate source is the *Poetics* of Theophrastus'.[51] This cannot be. The expansion of the list is polemical. It runs directly counter to Aristotle's aims, as the rest of the treatise will soon bear out. Let us simply note for now where the extra elements have been added, namely in the very areas that Aristotle most wished to suppress: rhythm, staging, *topoi* (stage directions? place indications? *tupoi*? ['poses'?]),[52] and movements. Then comes, in the next paragraph, the first crushing blow to Aristotelian tragic theory: 'Sufferings are more mimetic than actions'. The claim stands Aristotle's theory on its head. Once again, the editor tries too hard to reconcile the treatise with its (anti-)model: 'Implicit in Aristotle's *Poetics* but nowhere stated'.[53] The claim is nowhere stated in the *Poetics* because it goes right against the grain of that work, according to which actions (*praxeis*) are the heart and soul of tragedy; indeed, the imitation of action is constitutive of tragedy's formal essence (*Poetics*, ch. 6). *On Tragedy* sees things differently, however. 'For the protagonistic element in all tragic dramas is *pathos*. Tragedy is also imitative of what is called character, and especially in the stasimon songs… But *praxis* [action] *is harder to imitate than suffering*'.

This last claim is nothing short of a shocking howler in Aristotelese, while the business about stasimon songs being imitative of character (never mind 'especially so') can claim *no* precedent in Aristotle, even as it hints at the fundamental disaccord between the two approaches to tragic drama that is being staged in this document. Aristotle may mention music, but music receives no analysis in the *Poetics* whatsoever. *On Tragedy* is thus standing Aristotle's approach to tragedy on its head in at least two distinct ways. First, it approaches tragedy *as staged drama*, which involves *visible suffering*. And second, it looks to *music* and *dance* as a special source of tragic style and tragic pleasure. Simplifying, we could say that *On Tragedy* appeals to the *eye* and to the *ear*. Simplifying still further, we could say that the treatise revives the *phenomenal character* of tragedy that Aristotle (and Plato) sought to eliminate from the genre's idea. As if on cue, the next section brings out this very difference for

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[51] Browning 1963, 68.

[52] Cf. Perusino 1993, 40. *Tupoi* was proposed by Borthwick (Browning 1963, 72).

[53] Browning 1963, 73.

us. The *ekkuklêma*, the device used for wheeling out and displaying gory victims in tragedy, is praised for being a 'dramatic requirement for *making* events within the house *appear*' (αἴτημα δραματικὸν τοῦ φαίνεσθαι),[54] and then other devices for making gods and heroes *appear* (φαίνονται) on stage are mentioned. The author is plainly interested in tragedy's appearances, or to revert to our terminology from above, in its 'phenomenality'.

Finally, a whole paragraph is devoted to *melopoiia*, or musical composition. The language is relatively technical, and it has no parallels in the *Poetics*. And from here to the end, which is to say for the length of the second half of the treatise, the discussion is taken up with the particulars of strophic composition, meters, rhythms, song, acting, dance (movement), and musical instruments. The treatise finally comes to a close in a way that would be unthinkable to Aristotle: 'Both Euripides and Sophocles made use of the *cithara* in their tragedies, and Sophocles made use of the lyre in the *Thamyris*'. A remarkable slap in the face designed to set to rights the much slighted tragic Muse.[55] Here, tragedy, unlike Humpty Dumpty, is put back together again.

As these counterexamples indicate, Aristotle's approach to tragedy is, in its radical reductionism of tragic essence to form at the expense of matter, anything but standard practice in ancient aesthetics. This reductionism follows from a trait that is commonplace in Aristotle's thought, which we might call conceptual *khôrismos*, or separation: divining the essence of tragedy, Aristotle is convinced that the essence of a tragedy can be grasped virtually independently of its surrounding characteristics. The move is in ways Platonic. What is more, there is a continuity of the deepest kind across the various branches of Aristotle's thinking, though this is hardly ever discussed. In *On the Soul*, the soul *qua* active intellect is 'what it is'—which is to say precisely defined—'only when separated' (χωρισθείς);[56] in other words, 'the "active intellect" has no corresponding bodily potentiality'.[57] This is in answer to a view of an earlier chapter from the same work: 'if there is anything *idion* [proper] to the soul's actions or affections, the soul will admit of sepa-

[54] See Browning 1963, 73 and Perusino 1993, 48 for the meaning of αἴτημα. Papaioannou compares Eust. *ad Od.* 1.396.23 and *ad Il.* 3.824.21.

[55] Nor is it the solitary text of its kind. See Psellus' essay on Euripides and George of Pisidia, in Dyck 1986.

[56] *de An.* 3.5.430a22–23.

[57] Long 1982, 35. Cf. Robinson 1978, esp. 117–124; form as the principle of intelligibility is hinted at 1978, 122.

ration (ἐνδέχοιτ' ἂν χωρίζεσθαι)'.[58] Clearly, by the later chapter Aristotle has isolated that *idion*, the soul's proprietary and defining aspect.[59] To these considerations, let us add Aristotle's claim that soul, so defined, stands to the rest of an organism like *tekhnê* to *hulê*, or art to material.[60] This should resonate even more when we recall that for Aristotle *muthos* (plot) is the 'soul'—which would mean, the non-'aisthetic' and 'actively intellectual' part of the soul—of tragedy; it is, at the very least, separable in definition (χωριστὸν κατὰ λόγον),[61] the principle in virtue of which alone, viewed *per se*, a tragedy is 'what it is' (καθ' ἣν λέγεται τόδε τι; αὐτὸ καθ' αὑτό);[62] and this is because *muthos* is the principle of a tragedy's intelligibility *and* the criterion of its identity as well.[63] And while it is true that Aristotle's efforts are directed, ultimately, at the synthesis of matter with form ('enmattered' form), in reaction to the Platonic 'separation' of Forms,[64] at least as much effort is spent in the Aristotelian corpus at isolating that which within these compounds (or predicated of them) gives them essence and identity. Here, Aristotle is unsparingly formalistic: essence is logically divorced from matter (ἄνευ ὕλης).[65] And the trait of logical separatism is deeply ingrained.[66]

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[58] *de An.* 1.1.403a10–11.

[59] On its probable Platonic and Academic origins, see Vlastos 1991, 256–265.

[60] *de An.* 3.5.430a12–13.

[61] *de An.* 3.4.429a11–12.

[62] *de An.* 2.1.412a8–9; *Po.* 4.1449a8.

[63] *Po.*18.1456a7–8.

[64] As stressed brilliantly by Owen 1965. '*Idion*' is Aristotle's way of making form inhere again.

[65] *Metaph.* Z 7.1032b14.

[66] In rendering a distinction between form and matter in this sense, Aristotle can be assumed to be reverting to a distinction *within* matter of the kind that is highlighted at *Metaph.* Z 10.1035a17–22. In the wake of this kind of distinction, Irwin 1988, 241 usefully makes a distinction between 'proximate matter' and 'remote matter', the former belonging to the definition of the formal hylomorphic totality of a definitional entity (the essential man), whereby form actualizes the organic matter of an entity, the latter constituting the 'chemical' (what I am calling 'material') components that comprise that entity as a physical thing and that survive its destruction or death (here, form and matter are truly sundered in their functionality). The former compound is what Irwin (*ibid.* 243) calls 'a formal compound', the latter 'a material compound'. Interestingly, the matter of a formal compound will not be perceptible in any physical sense, whereas the matter of a material compound will be. You cannot 'see' the form of a statue or a tragedy, whereas matter in the latter sense (bronze, costumes) is 'part' of a compound precisely '*qua* perceptible matter' (ὡς ὕλη αἰσθητή) (*Metaph.* Z 7.1035a17). And as we are about to see, in the philosophical tradition inspired by Aristotle, matter's connection to material (physical) sensation is hardly its selling point, and is even its downfall, aesthetically speaking.

7. *Aesthetic materialism*

Above we have seen how Aristotle, even more so than Plato, targets what is formally active in the essence of tragedy, which in turn represents (*ex hypothesi*) the culmination and *telos* of literature *tout court*. In this way, Aristotle can isolate the essential function of tragedy, its *idion*, *ergon*, or *telos*.[67] Yet this kind of isolation, which at bottom is nothing more than the identification of an aspect and its abstraction from a totality as such, has powerful historical implications that go well beyond what Aristotle ever imagined. For once this essentializing and functionalist move is made, nothing prevents its being coopted to other ends. If some property *F* is what defines poetry, then *F* can be filled in with something besides a principle of intelligibility (Aristotle) or of unintelligibility (Plato). Why not make the *material* cause the essence of poetry? Or a *particular* kind of intelligibility (which Aristotle's covertly is), such as allegory, as later writers would, even more systematically than earlier fledgling attempts had done?[68] Thus, the historical irony of formalism is that it gives conceptual tools, if not quite license, to its antagonists, for instance to exponents of a materialist poetics. The proto-euphonist critic Neoptolemus (of Parium, presumably), whose theory is preserved by Philodemus, is a good example of such aspectualism gone awry from an Aristotelian perspective.[69] In his wake, the euphonist's isolation of the category of 'the poem *qua* poem' (τὸ ποίημα καθὸ ποίημα), which is to say the poem as a texture of sounds independent of its meanings, is a further evolution of the same idea.[70] The same holds for another of the euphonist critics' distinctions. The *sole* preoccupation of poets, according to these Hellenistic critics, lies in what is *idion* to their poetic productions, not in what is common to all other poems or what can be found 'outside' their art (by which they mean meaning, diction, plots, and even, presumably, moral content)—whence the phrase that is used to designate this extraneous material, ἔξω τῆς τέχνης, that which lies 'outside the art' of 'the poem *qua* poem'.[71] The phrase is striking for the

[67] *Po.* 4.1449a8–9; 6.1450a30–31; 13.1452b29, 33; 25.1460b21, 24–25; 26.1462a11.

[68] On this tradition of allegoresis, see now Struck 2004.

[69] See Porter 1995, 102–118, and *passim.*

[70] Porter 1995, 130; cf. *ibid,* 102 for the characteristic euphonist claim that 'the composition *in and of itself* (καθ' αὑτήν) produces *psukhagôgia*' through the sound that the composition yields (*P. Herc.* 1676 col. 7.7–17).

[71] *P. Herc.* 1074a fr. 1.27–fr. 2.1 = cols. 132–133 Janko: 'But ⟨Crates⟩ says that "the

way it recalls Aristotle in the *Poetics* (ἔξω τοῦ δράματος, ἔξω τοῦ μύθου)[72] and Aristotle's strictures on Plato's censure of the art of poetry narrowly conceived 'in and of itself'. But it also rejects Aristotle's own criteria of what counts as essentially poetic. Plato for his part had helped poetic materialism articulate its program merely by dividing up poetry into two conceptual halves, those of form and content, or rather of surface features and deeper meanings, and then by casting strong aspersions on both sides of this equation.

One final point about Plato and Aristotle. In their critiques of materialism in aesthetics (of matter, the senses, and appearances), one finds a *residual* attraction to everything they would oppose. One need only think of how the ideal of beauty is dressed up as a desirable sensuous object—the erotics of Forms are powerful, and they reintroduce what Plato seems keen to reject. I will speak about Aristotle's odd materialism, *malgré lui*, in a moment. Here, we might consider the words of Merleau-Ponty, who writes, 'Disons seulement que l'idéalité pure n'est pas elle-même sans chair ni délivrée des structures d'horizon: elle en vit'.[73] Nor is it always the case that idealities live off of 'un *autre* chair' and 'un *autre* corps'—they often live parasitically, ambivalently, off of the *very same* bodily condition that they reject. It is in this ambivalent attachment to matter from which ideals also strain to break free that they attain their own degree of (material) sublimity. But let us first return to Aristotle, where the point about material attachment can be interestingly demonstrated in the very heart and soul of his conception of tragedy.

Aristotle's logic of the poetic whole in the *Poetics* is one of a synthetic unity, of a compound made up of parts.[74] The idea of form as 'a discriminable … isolable element in or aspect of' a work of art is entirely foreign to his thinking—thankfully so, as *no such entity exists in the world*.[75] Aristotle's idea of a tragic whole and its unitary character is, on the contrary, *molecular, kinetic*, and even *medical*: 'a plot … should be so constructed that, when some part is transposed or removed, the

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arguments and [all the] meanings lie outside the art"' (ὁ δὲ 'ἔξω | | τῆς τέχνης' φησὶν εἶναι 'τοὺς] | λόγους καὶ [πάντα τὰ διανο] | ήματα').

72 Arist. *Po.* 14.1453b32; 17.1455b8. Cf. ἔξω τῆς τραγῳδίας (*ibid.* 15.1454b7), and also the rhetorical equivalent, ἔξω τοῦ πράγματος (*Rh.* 1.1.1354a15).

73 See n. 16, above.

74 Arist. *Po.* 6.1450a15 (ἡ τῶν πραγμάτων σύστασις); 10.1452a19–20; 9.1450a4–5.

75 Wollheim 2001, 133.

whole is disrupted (διαφέρεσθαι) and disturbed (κινεῖσθαι)'.[76] There is little room or scope here for the modern ghost of 'form'.

Secondly, and closely related to this first point: Aristotle's conception cannot help but revert to a kind of materialism, despite his best intentions. With the backbone of tragedy—its soul—emphatically defined as a *sustasis* or *sunthesis*, or aggregate of parts, albeit immaterial parts (actions, the ingredients of *muthos*),[77] Aristotle is dipping into the conceptual vocabulary of his predecessors who were following a materialist model of physical elements (*stoikheia*) joined into a compound unity. That model is ultimately derived from atomism. To be sure, Aristotle would seek to downplay this kind of connection. One small clue that he has done so comes from the very evidence, which is faint but indisputable, that the theory of plot was in existence long before Aristotle decided to revamp it in the late fourth century. There is even some evidence that plot was originally called a *sustasis*, and that as such it had strongly material connotations that could be expressed in different ways. To give an example: one of the equivalent expressions for plot found in Aristophanes' *Frogs* appears to be 'the nerves [or 'sinews': νεῦρα] of tragedy'.[78] It is only natural that Aristotle would wish to replace a corporeal metaphor like 'nerves' with the metaphor of the 'soul', the latter being for him a decidedly non-corporeal and non-composite entity.[79] But he would also have been reluctant to reform the language of poetics altogether. Saddled with the terms *sustasis* and *sunthesis*, he was likewise saddled with their vestigial material associations.[80]

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[76] *Po.* 8.1451a31–35; tr. Janko. On the medical and surgical echoes in this passage, see both Lucas and Else, *ad loc.*

[77] E.g., ἡ τῶν πραγμάτων σύστασις (*Po.* 6.1450a15); ἐξ αὐτῆς τῆς συστάσεως τοῦ μύθου (10.1452a19–20); λέγω γὰρ μῦθον τοῦτον τὴν σύνθεσιν τῶν πραγμάτων (9.1450a4–5; cf. 13.1452b31).

[78] Ar. *Ra.* 862: τἄπη, τὰ μέλη, τὰ νεῦρα τῆς τραγῳδίας. A bizarre echo in this connection is Plato's description, at *R.* 3.411b, of the way music can emasculate a healthy individual, cutting out 'the very sinews of his soul' (ἐκτέμῃ ὥσπερ νεῦρα ἐκ τῆς ψυχῆς).

[79] See *de An.* 1.5.410a18–21 and 1.5 *passim*, rejecting the language of Presocratic predecessors who took the soul to be a material *sustasis*; *ibid.* 2.1.412a17, rejecting the corporeality of the soul.

[80] The same is true of Aristotle's theory of language, which is likewise inherited, and likewise inflected with corporeal associations (e.g., *arthra* 'joints', 'articles'; *sundesmoi* 'sinews', 'ligaments', 'conjunctions'; and not least, *phônê* 'voice'; cf. Belardi 1985, 10–20; Zirin 1980; Lo Piparo 1999, 126–129; Sluiter forthcoming). Nor should we omit the fact that 'structure' has an architectural sense that is occasionally felt even today, while 'plot' has an original spatial connotation.

He doubtless could conceive of the concrete and embodied 'form' of tragedy in no other way, and neither could any other ancient, so far as I am aware.[81]

8. *The sources of materialism, en route to the material sublime*

Now to take stock. I hope it is clear (and further examples would only help to strengthen the case) that Plato and Aristotle were not only pioneering in the area of beauty's formalism, but they were also *reacting to* beauty's materialism (to beauty's material causes). The mystery is, whom were they reacting *to*? Aristotle's use of the term *sunthesis* immediately constitutes a partial clue, which I have already unpacked: the atomists. Let's take up this question more broadly now, and name the culprits generally: they were the so-called Presocratics. I want to suggest that the Presocratics paved the way for the radical push into formalism by the two grand philosophers of art from the fourth century. They did so in a few different ways. First, by virtue of the kinds of conceptual lines they knew how to draw, the Presocratics produced, and so made it possible to isolate, the two categories of *matter* (the realm of substances) and *phenomena* (the realm of appearances), which were unknown as such in prior mythological and mystical thinking. Henceforth, one could conceptualize matter and phenomena, and one could either fetishize them (in a reductive materialism, as with the pluralists, culminating in the atomists) or vilify them (in a spiteful anti-materialism, as in the case of the Eleatic monists, e.g., Parmenides and Zeno). There were intermediary positions, of course, and there was plenty of room for profound ambivalence too. But on the whole, ambivalence does not seem to have been the dominant mood.

But the Presocratics did more than simply produce the concepts of matter and phenomena. They also took an *aesthetic or proto-aesthetic attitude* towards these things. One immediate way in which they did so was by treating matter *as* phenomena, and *vice versa*. In other words, their tendency was to take up a *phenomenological perspective on matter*. According to this view, matter was something to be perceived; it was an

[81] This is so even despite his much-vaunted but equally much-disputed 'hylomorphism' (on which, see Nussbaum and Rorty 1992), which is the view that the soul cannot function apart from its enmattered condition in a substrate (a body). My points about the soul nowhere in Aristotle being defined as a *sustasis* or a *sunthesis* still hold.

object of *aisthêsis*, and so it automatically had primary aesthetic qualities that could be attended to, experienced, and described. Many of these qualities are poetic-sounding, and sometimes they are couched in the traditional language of the poets, a natural reference point and one still vested with canonical authority in the sixth and fifth centuries, when the Presocratics were most active. I can only hint at this development now, and I will do so in such a way that it will send us forward into the later, Hellenistic period, when Platonic and Aristotelian canons are rejected again, and beauty turns into the sublime. My point, in a nutshell, is that the Presocratics invented two concepts at one and the same time: they discovered matter, and some of them discovered this as an aesthetically attractive category; and when they did, they discovered the sublime.[82]

Xenophanes' description of the heavens, filtered by Hippolytus, is a good example of this kind of thinking (DK 21A33.3):

> The sun comes into being each day from little pieces of fire that are collected, and *the earth is infinite* and enclosed neither by air nor by the heaven. *There are innumerable suns and moons*, and all things are made of earth. (tr. Kirk–Raven–Schofield)
>
> τὸν δὲ ἥλιον ἐκ μικρῶν πυριδίων ἀθροιζομένων γίνεσθαι καθ' ἑκάστην ἡμέραν, τὴν δὲ γῆν ἄπειρον εἶναι καὶ μήτε ὑπ' ἀέρος μήτε ὑπὸ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ περιέχεσθαι. καὶ ἀπείρους ἡλίους εἶναι καὶ σελήνας, τὰ δὲ πάντα εἶναι ἐκ γῆς.

The heavenly bodies, for Xenophanes, seem to have been made up either of a concentration of fiery particles or of ignited clouds, and scholars sometimes worry about this divergence in the testimonia.[83] But an even greater divergence ought to be felt in the claim that the sun is made of fire but all things are made of earth.[84] The contradiction can perhaps be resolved if we assume that fire, too, is made of earth, or else that *earth* is Xenophanes' way of expressing *matter*, and that fire is a form of matter. Alternatively, earth is not a constitutive element but a local source ('all things *come from* earth').[85]

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[82] Monists, like Parmenides and his Eleatic followers, naturally rejected this tendency. But in doing so, they merely helped to articulate and enforce the concepts of matter and appearances, *e contrario*.

[83] Kirk–Raven–Schofield 1983, 173.

[84] Cf. DK 21A32.

[85] So, e.g., Lesher 1992, 124–128, *ad* B27. Lesher, *per litt.*, suggests a third alternative for resolving the problem, namely, 'that when Xenophanes mentions earth, he means to include moisture as part of the earth (cf. B29)'. (Cf. Fränkel's somewhat opaque remark,

Whatever the case, the world so viewed is a pretty place, and it is filled with matter. And so too, faced with a verse like *Iliad* 11.27 (a description of Agamemnon's corselet inlaid with snakes, which are compared in their sheen to rainbows), Xenophanes, according to the scholia, responded in kind: 'What they call Iris [rainbow], this too is cloud, purple and red and yellow to behold (πορφύρεον καὶ φοινίκεον καὶ χλωρὸν ἰδέσθαι)'.[86] This is a nice point. To make it requires the eye of a most careful reader, as well as that of a natural scientist, capable of penetrating several levels into an embedded simile in order to retrieve a tiny glittering detail. It is also poetically expressed. The Homericism, with ἰδέσθαι in final position, seems calculated to bring to mind, or rather to the echoing ear, two epic formulas: εἰς ὦπα ἰδέσθαι ('to look X in the face') and especially θαῦμα ἰδέσθαι ('a wonder to behold'). There is thaumaturgy in the natural wonders of a secularized nature, too.[87]

The same holds for another fragment from Xenophanes, this time one that is more obviously cast in poetic form (hexameters) (B28 = Achilles *Intr. Arat.* 4.34.11 Maas):

> Of earth this is the upper limit which we see *by our feet*,
> in contact with the air; *but its underneath continues indefinitely.*
> (tr. Kirk–Raven–Schofield)
>
> γαίης μὲν τόδε πεῖρας ἄνω *παρὰ ποσσὶν* ὁρᾶται
> ἠέρι προσπλάζον, *τὸ κάτω δ' ἐς ἄπειρον*
> *ἱκνεῖται.*

These verses are remarkable for a few different reasons. First of all, they reiterate the theme of the *proliferation of matter ad infinitum* witnessed in the earlier report by Hippolytus. But they do so in a dizzying, vertiginous way. Or rather, they bring out what was vertiginous in the theme already quoted. Only now, they reproduce this endlessness, the infinite expansiveness of matter in all directions and even (perhaps, though this is contested) into other worlds, in the form of an *abyss* of matter—one that takes place right beneath your very own feet.[88] This conceit is no doubt a deliberate paradox. Though, as it were, on the surface seemingly designed to demonstrate the solidity of the

'Of course, the sea must be counted as earth' [Fränkel 1974, 119], which could support either view.)

[86] DK B32; tr. Kirk–Raven–Schofield.

[87] Similarly, Lesher 1992, 143, who refers to *Od.* 6.306, 13.108 ('purple, a marvel to behold') and to the fact that in Hesiod Iris is the daughter of Thaumas (Hes. *Th.* 99).

[88] Cf. Mourelatos 2002, 335.

earth, the fragment in effect points up the opposite of this geophysical feature. How stable, conceptually, is the ground we stand on, which is to say, what determines where the line gets drawn between where we stand and the infinite space of earth below? The conceit is for the same reason sublime, or so it would seem in later tradition—for instance, to the author of *On the Sublime*, Longinus, in his account of Tartarean abysses, to which Xenophanes' text has likewise been thought to allude.[89] The question is whether it was not already felt to be sublime in the sixth century BCE. The evidence in favor is strictly inferential, as it can only be. The Presocratics, after all, are natural philosophers, not aestheticians.[90]

Xenophanes is typical of the Ionian pluralists in their stance towards matter. What is most significant about the Presocratics' contribution to aesthetic thinking is not only that they, as it were, dub matter or materiality categories of thought and occasionally find beauty in this realm, but that they construct these categories as existing in infinite expanses, farther than the eye can see or the mind can grasp, whether proliferating endlessly into this one world or else (as in the case, for example, of Anaximander, Xenophanes, Anaxagoras, and the atomists) into infinite parallel or successive worlds. Thus, what stands out as endowed with an immediate and arguably intrinsic aesthetic value is the sheer *profusion of matter* that so many of the Presocratics countenance in their systems. There is something overwhelming and breathtaking about this kind of postulate, which is in its own way sublime (a term that does not seem to have occurred to the Presocratics, although it is occasionally used in later descriptions of their thought).[91]

Xenophanes may well be inaugurating an entire philosophical tradition, the boldest exponent of which will be the atomist Lucretius. Consider Lucretius, singing the praises of his school's founder, Epicurus, in Book 3 of *de Rerum Natura* (*DRN* 3.17, 25–30):

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[89] On this hint of abyssal depths in the Xenophanean passage and its possible poetic allusions, see Lesher 1992, 130–131 ('"indefinite" or "indeterminate" depths'); for Empedocles' reaction to it, see DK 31B39.

[90] With the sole exception of Democritus, who wrote on just about everything, as Aristotle attests—but whose work in aesthetics is known only from his preserved titles.

[91] Cf. 'Your thoughts go higher / are more sublime than the upper air' (φρονεῖτε νῦν αἰθέρος ὑψηλότερον) (Adesp. *TrGF* 2.127 = D.S. 16.92.3), which can be connected to the sublime thoughts of the natural philosopher whose mind dwells in heavenly observations.

For as soon as your philosophy, springing from your godlike soul,
begins to proclaim aloud the nature of things,
the terrors of the mind fly away, the walls of the world
part asunder, I see things moving on through the void
...
The quarters of Acheron are nowhere to be seen,
nor yet is earth a barrier to prevent all things being descried.
which are carried on *underneath through the void below our feet.*
At these things, as it were, *some godlike pleasure and a thrill of awe*
seizes on me, to think that thus by your power nature
is made so clear and manifest, *laid bare to sight on every side.*
(tr. Bailey, adapted)

nam simul ac ratio tua coepit vociferari
naturam rerum, divina mente coortam,
diffugiunt animi terrores, moenia mundi
discedunt. totum video per inane geri res.
...
at contra nusquam apparent Acherusia templa,
nec tellus obstat quin omnia dispiciantur,
sub pedibus quae cumque infra per inane geruntur.
his ibi me rebus quaedam divina voluptas
percipit atque horror, quod sic natura tua vi
tam manifesta patens ex omni parte retecta est.

The moment described is one in which the materiality of phenomena finally *cease* to become an obstacle and a limit to the materialist—their scrim is lifted off the visible world—and the materialist in effect transcends appearances to become something like a *transcendental materialist*, someone who can take a holy and eerie pleasure in the *unlimited* appearances of matter and the world. Such a pleasure, being grounded in a paradox as it is, can only be described as sublime. (Further parallels with Xenophanes, which I cannot discuss here, are palpable. Elsewhere, I have shown direct echoes between Lucretius and Longinus, which point to a shared set of references, no doubt within a tradition of paradoxography that reaches back to Theophrastus' account of natural wonders, which in turn derives from Presocratic sources.)[92]

With Xenophanes we can see how the Presocratics not only discovered matter in a philosophical sense, but they at times absolutely *reveled* in it. They discovered matter in an exponential form: that of multiplied phenomena, of heavenly bodies, of bodies proliferating into infinity. In Xenophanes, we see the *abyssal* implications of this hyperextension of

[92] See Porter 2007.

matter: Xenophanes is inviting us to think beyond the limits of matter into its absence, here in the form of a void (the 'empty'). It is as if the very 'sublimation' of matter by way of its pluralization and infinitization produced the thought of its opposite. This tendency is what I call *the material sublime*, in order to mark it off from the sublime in its other, more familiar and idealized form, which we can call *the immaterial sublime*. The immaterial sublime is the kind found in Plato (the whiteness of whiteness, the rapture of pure Forms), in other parts of Longinus, and in the Neoplatonists, to name just these. In the tradition of the material sublime, *les extrêmes se touchent*, inevitably, and often perilously—here, as matter and emptiness or void. As Edmund Burke says in another context: 'Thus are two ideas as opposite as can be imagined reconciled in the extremes of both; and both in spite of their opposite nature brought to concur in producing the sublime'.[93] At times it is hard to tell apart these two kinds of sublimity, for they often seem to converge. For example, the ideal sublimity likewise begins in a collision with matter, albeit in a repulsive rejection of matter: the refusal of matter can also be sublime. The two traditions of the sublime, the material and immaterial sublime, converge in later antiquity in Longinus, as I wish to indicate briefly next.

Let us return to where we left Aristotle, when he wrote in chapter 7 of the *Poetics* that 'though a very small (πάμμικρον) creature could not be beautiful, since our view loses all distinctness (συγχεῖται) when it comes near to taking no perceptible time, an enormously ample one (παμμέγεθες) could not be beautiful either, since our view of it is not simultaneous, so that we lose the sense of its unity and wholeness as we look it over; imagine, for instance, an animal a thousand miles long'. Longinus' point is the same, but he arrives at the opposite conclusion. When he looks at a verse or a figure of speech or thought, he asks us to imagine, precisely, something, anything, a thousand miles long (and more), so as to lose our sense of its unity and wholeness as we look it over. Our view passes into indistinctness, true: it is eclipsed by the *painfully distinct presence and immediacy* of the object of our gaze made present and immediate by its grandeur, whatever its size, or rather made grand by its presence, immediacy, and proximity. Hence, the criterion of size is delusive: what matters is the relation of the object to the viewer's gaze. A tiny object, be it physical or linguistic, held up close

93 Burke 1968 [1757; 1759], 81.

to the eye for inspection can overwhelm the gaze every bit as much as a galaxy, and even more so than a mountain viewed from afar. The sublime is very much a matter of *enargeia*, which is to say of phenomenal and sensuous presence. It is a paradoxical aesthetic effect, inasmuch as in saturating the beholder's gaze with presence and immediacy it blinds it as well, paralyzing it, stupefying it, virtually anaesthetizing it—or else, as Longinus might prefer to say (and in any event, as he shows), redefining our very concept of what the aesthetic means and does.[94]

Interestingly, Longinus' tendency is not to oppose the sublime to beauty (for instance, in 17.2 he speaks of 'the surrounding brilliance of beauty and grandeur', which might as well be a hendiadys); and in this insensitivity to the distinction he is following ingrained precedents.[95] As one commentator astutely notes, '*the Greeks associated bigness very closely with beauty*', which is the same thing as saying that sublimity was beautiful (nor was bigness the only mark of beauty or of the sublime).[96] But while Longinus' sublime reaches back to an earlier tradition of aesthetic values, it is also opposed to the formalized aesthetics of beauty as represented by Plato and Aristotle, and by others in their wake. Formal limits on beauty have no place in Longinus: beauty here is allowed to overflow itself—its traditional philosophical self—and to be enjoyed without constraints of any kind. And yet, the Longinian beautiful is in a sense all that beauty in Plato and Aristotle ever was: it is simply this in all of its sheer intensity, without regard for the conditions that once enframed it, be these geometrical or tragic (generic). Among the most memorable images of the sublime in Longinus are those of the collapse of the world in the course of the Gigantomachy, whereby 'the earth is torn from its foundations (ἐκ βάθρων)', and its interior dimensions are exposed in a cosmic disaster (*Subl.* 9.6):

> Do you see how the earth is torn from its foundations, Tartarus laid bare, and the whole universe overthrown and broken up, so that all things—Heaven (*Ouranos*) and Hell (*Hades*), things mortal and things immortal—share the warfare and the perils of that ancient battle? (tr. Russell)

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94 *Subl.* 9.4, 9.6.

95 Cf. also *Subl.* 5.1 ('beauty of style, sublimity, and charm'); 17.2 ('beauty and grandeur'); 30.1 ('grandeur, beauty, old world charm', etc.); 35.3 ('the grandeur and beauty' of life); 39.3 (the 'beauty' of composition 'builds a sublime and harmonious structure' that uplifts the audience); 40.1 ('I come now to a principle of particular importance for lending grandeur to our words. The beauty of the body …').

96 Lucas 1968, *ad* Arist. *Po.* 7. 1451a10. Cf. Scarry 1999, 84 on the fact that beauty and sublimity were originally coterminous prior to their modern bifurcation.

> ἐπιβλέπεις, ἑταῖρε, ὡς ἀναρρηγνυμένης μὲν ἐκ βάθρων γῆς, αὐτοῦ δὲ γυμνουμένου ταρτάρου, ἀνατροπὴν δὲ ὅλου καὶ διάστασιν τοῦ κόσμου λαμβάνοντος, πάνθ' ἅμα, οὐρανὸς ᾅδης, τὰ θνητὰ τὰ ἀθάνατα, ἅμα τῇ τότε συμπολεμεῖ καὶ συγκινδυνεύει μάχῃ;

Such images bring us to the edge of beauty, to a beauty without limiting frameworks. What is more, Longinus fastens his gaze onto material things and draws his effect from them, unlike Plato who *rejects* matter to achieve an effect of philosophical transcendence.

To be provocative, we could say that Longinian sublimity points us to the *material* causes of beauty, to those features of beautiful objects that frequently remind us of their physical reality, often in their very defection—whenever they bulk large (or small), break apart into gaps or fragments, strain the imagination, remind us of overwhelming natural forces, dangers, durabilities, or ephemeralities, and the like.[97] Sappho's body in fragments is one example ('Do you not admire the way in which she brings everything together—mind and body, hearing and tongue, eyes and skin? She seems to have lost them all, and to be looking for them as though they were external to her'; 10.3; tr. Russell). The various accounts of poetic language are another (40.4):

> The words are propped up by one another and rest on the intervals between them; set wide apart like that, they give the impression of solid strength. (tr. Russell)
>
> στηριγμούς τε ἔχειν πρὸς ἄλληλα τὰ ὀνόματα καὶ ἐξερείσματα τῶν χρόνων πρὸς ἑδραῖον διαβεβηκότα μέγεθος.

Differently put, the Longinian sublime points us to *the sublimity of matter itself.* What is more, for all its appearances of powerful originality, it is not the case that the Longinian sublime appears *ex nihilo*, full born with Longinus. In fact, for all of his imperial and imperious classicism and his strong antipathies to Hellenistic tastes (I am assuming for him a date contemporary with Hadrian), in many respects Longinus' aesthetics appears to be derived from the Hellenistic age, if not from earlier too (Homer, Pindar, and Aeschylus being good candidates for earlier critical attention).[98] Were there space I would try to illustrate how this is so. But that would lead to another discussion.[99] At the very least, I hope it

[97] *Subl.* 9.4, 9.6, etc.

[98] See above at n. 44, for starters.

[99] See Porter forthcoming, 2009; and Porter forthcoming (from which much of this essay has been excerpted).

is clear that the contact with matter is part of the risk that renders the whole of aesthetic experience potentially sublime. It is here more than anywhere else that Longinus displays his Presocratic ancestry.

9. *Conclusion*

I began with a consideration of how matter and materiality have evolved as dirty categories of thought in early Western aesthetics, particularly in its canonically formative moments in Plato and Aristotle. But this disgracing of matter belies an alternative history in which matter and materiality have had an alternative role to play. Early aesthetic thought—I am thinking of Homer and early archaic poetry, art, and music, but also early inscriptional evidence and sculpture—was from the first fascinated by the material appearances of art—by the play of surfaces, textures, details, sounds, colors, and so on, often for their own sake and not for the sake of a subordinating formal or semantic richness. This confrontation of a beholder with objects in their sheer materiality, never outside of cultural mediation but always conditioned by it, gave rise to an alternative aesthetic experience. The more blunt the confrontation was, the more intense and sublime the experience proved to be. Indeed, sublimity in one of its forms, what I have been calling the material sublime, arises from this bruising contact with objects, beyond the mere appreciation of their beauty: sublimity results from a *collision* of sensation with material surfaces. Perhaps this makes of the sublime the most disgraced aesthetic experience there is. But then, as I have been trying to suggest, no experience is uncontaminated by phenomena, and no ideals are either.[100]

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CHAPTER TWELVE

WITH MALICE AFORETHOUGHT: THE ETHICS OF *MALITIA* ON STAGE AND AT LAW

Elaine Fantham

1. *Introduction*

As *kakos* generates *kakia*, so *malus* generates *malitia*. Or so it would seem. *Malitia* is the disposition or characteristic of being *malus*, just as *saevitia, stultitia*, and *tristitia* are the dispositions of persons *saevus*, *stultus*, and *tristis*. So why are there so many discrepancies between the characteristics covered by the Greek and Latin abstract nouns? We cannot pin down *kakia* to a single kind of badness, but it is predominantly the quality of being unfit for purpose, cowardly on the battlefield, or lazy and untrustworthy in the household (of slaves) or agora (of fellow citizens, like *rhêtores* and fishmongers). Again, as Cicero realized, while *kakia* evokes the flaws of a bad apple and its human equivalent, this is better conveyed in Latin by *vitium*, whether singular or plural, than by *malitia*, a word only rarely applied in the plural, and then denoting specific tricks or bad actions.

However basic *malitia* may seem as a concept, a cluster of factors affect and limit the history of its usage. Its prosody, with three consecutive short syllables, excludes it not only from the dactylic hexameters of satire, Lucretian and Virgilian didactic and epic, but even from elegiacs, a genre in which active *malitia* plays only a marginal role. It is found predominantly in the dramatic scripts of early Latin, and in both early and classical prose. But here a second factor intervenes—the accident of generic survival, which preserved comedy in abundance but allowed early tragedy and historical writing and oratory to disappear almost completely, with only one prose appearance before we come to Cicero's *de Inventione* and early speeches. And by the time Cicero delivered these speeches for lawsuits or political criminal charges, *malitia* had been largely defined by its comic associations as prime characteristic of the clever slaves and women who make the intrigues of comedy (see

section 2). We owe to Eduard Fraenkel the full appreciation of just how lavishly Plautus created his rich portrayal of slave virtuosity in which the slave's capacity for fraud and deception played the most intrinsic and memorable part.[1]

The main purpose of this chapter is to illustrate (section 2, continued in section 4) the gradual displacement of subjective psychological *malitia* by objective, externally judged, *dolus malus* and actions taken *dolo malo*. While keeping historical sequence I will turn aside to discuss a problematic allusion to legal precision as a form of *malitia* (section 3), then attempt to mark the limits of the concept by comparing Ciceronian comments on *malitia* with Aristotle's discussion of *kakia* in the *Nicomachean Ethics* and considering Cicero's ethical treatment of *malitia* in *de Officiis* and other treatises (section 5). I hope through this discursive survey to demonstrate how *malitia* as the *vox propria* for bad intentions and wilful deceitfulness, whether motivated by simple self-interest or by pointed hostility to an individual (like modern 'malice') began as early as the second century BCE to be displaced by the concept of *dolus malus* and actions taken *dolo malo*: once this is recognized in law, *malitia* lapses from practical contexts to survive chiefly in the discourse of ethics.

2. Malitia *and genre. The earliest attestations in Roman drama*

It is well known that comedy practices its own morality—or range of moralities—varying with the closeness of the comic intrigue to uninhibited farce, or to the ethical 'comedy of manners' at the other end of the spectrum. Luckily the early evidence for Roman *malitia* is not absolutely confined to comedy: we have one clear example of its use from a tragic text which may be almost contemporary with Plautus. So let us start by considering the Latin concept of *malitia* with tragedy, and as I believe, the tragedy of Ennius.

Speaking of the passion of anger in *Tusculans* 4.77, Cicero comments that it is near to madness:

> At the prompting of anger this kind of abusive quarrel arises even between brothers: 'who on earth ever surpassed you in shamelessness?' 'Well, who ever surpassed you in deceitfulness?' You know what follows;

[1] See Fraenkel 1922 and its Italian translation, especially chapter 8 (*Il predominio della parte dello schiavo*) (Fraenkel 1960, 223–242). I would like to take this opportunity to express my lifelong gratitude for Eduard Fraenkel's teaching.

> the worst insults are hurled around between the brothers in alternating lines, making it obvious that they are sons of Atreus!
>
> cuius impulsu exsistit etiam inter fratres tale iurgium:
>
> > quis homo te exsuperavit usquam gentium inpudentia?
> > quis item malitia te?
>
> nosti quae sequntur; alternis enim versibus intorquentur inter fratres gravissimae contumeliae, ut facile appareat Atrei filios esse.

You will not find these lines in Jocelyn's learned study of Ennian tragedy, because he has erred on the side of caution: the lines could have occurred in some later tragedy about the Atridae such as Accius' *Atreus*. But Vahlen was surely right to follow Dobree in identifying the abusive stichomythia as part of the quarrel scene of *Iphigenia at Aulis*, and almost certainly from Ennius' tragic version of Euripides' play.[2] The accusation of shamelessness comes from Agamemnon in fury at his brother's demand for the sacrifice of Iphigenia; Menelaus's counter-charge of *malitia* must refer to the underhand letter sent by Agamemnon to warn Clytaemnestra not to come to the camp with her daughter—for Menelaus has just caught the messenger and read this letter. All or part of about seven lines of Euripides' quarrel could be represented here: Agamemnon's protests (*IA* 327, 329, 331) 'Where did you get it? dear gods, what a shameless mind you have!' … 'why should you mind my business, is that not shameless?' 'Is it not dreadful that I am not allowed to administer my own house?' and Menelaus' retort 'No, for you think crookedly (*plagia phroneis*)[3] now and in the past and you will again'.

Although *malitia* is the basic noun formation from *malus*, I will argue that its use is far more restricted than that of *kakia*, restricted like the common adjectives *maledicus*, *maleficus*, and *malevolus*,[4] to deliberately willing or doing harm (and I will be able to quote Cicero (twice!) in support of this argument). *Malitia* is deceitfulness, the will and the skill to deceive, something Plautus' slaves and courtesans boast of, and audiences enjoy: it is more often the quality of trickiness or trickery than actual tricks. (Since the intrigues of comedies usually depend on this trickery, audiences not only enjoy it but welcome it sympathetically.) In

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2 See Jocelyn 1969, 321, and Vahlen 1928 on the *Iphigenia at Aulis*.

3 More literally, this idiom can be read as 'you plot tricky things', more in keeping with the uses we are going to meet in comedy.

4 Obviously *malevolus* comes closest to the nucleus of evil intent, but all three adjectives are frequently applied to the same low-life figures (slaves, pimps, prostitutes) who are credited with *malitia*.

comedy we can produce one or two literal uses of the phrase *sine omni malitia* 'without any bad intent'. Thus in *Trinummus*, an exceptionally moralistic play, the spendthrift Lesbonicus has ruined himself by generosity to friends and extravagance on a mistress but he is honest, and innocent of illdoing (*Trin.* 338:[5] cf. *Bacchides* 1131).

It is of course much more fun to trace the boasts of *malitia* by Plautus' clever slaves and courtesans. Slaves, pimps, and many courtesans are operating a counter-ethos, in which like gangster rappers they boast of being *Ba-a-ad.* In *Miles*, the earliest datable Plautine comedy, the dutiful slave Sceledrus, convinced he has mistaken a strange woman for the soldier's courtesan, defends himself from the charge of false accusation: 'I didn't do it with evil intent' (*at non malitiose tamen/feci*: 562, cf. 569–570 'so that I would not think you had acted with evil intent': *ne malitiose factum id esse abs te arbitrer.*) But when the plotters produce the courtesans to trick the soldier, these professionals are ready for any dirty tricks required of a woman: *si quid faciundumst mulieri male et malitiose* (886) and boast of their powers 'when we have combined the powers of our separate trickery' (*ubi facta erit conlatio nostrarum malitiarum*) (942).[6] I would suggest that this plural use refers to their individual qualities of cleverness, rather than its manifestation in specific tricks.

Let me briefly add some samples of slave *malitia* from the mouth of Pseudolus, who takes the stage with boasts that he will act boldly, 'relying on the talent of my ancestors … and my own skill and deceitful trickery' (*maiorum meum fretus virtute … mea industria et malitia fraudulenta*) (582), and offers to his young master 'to give you three well-deserved joys, won fraudulently from three enemies by trickery, guile, and deceits' (*tris demeritas dem laetitias, de tribus/fraude partas per malitiam per dolum et fallacias*) (705–706). Here too *malitia* is his personal cleverness, distinct from the actual tricks (*dolum et fallacias*). But Plautus has no shortage of words for actual tricks: for the full range compare the soliloquy of the 'good' slave Tyndarus in *Captivi*, who runs through eight synonyms in as many lines (520–524; 530):

> my subtle lies (1) … my false tales and disguises (2 and 3) … no excuses for my treacheries (4) or escape for my misdeeds (5) nor a safe-house

[5] Plautus is quoted from W.M. Lindsay's Oxford Classical Text.

[6] The artificially grand use of *conlatio* suggests that *nostrae malitiae* is not simply 'our tricks' but the individual *malitia* 'trickiness' of each of us.

for my bravado nor refuge for my frauds (6); my sleight of hand (7) is exposed …
(530) unless I contrive some ingenious trick (8) in my breast.

subdolis mendaciis … meis (1)/ … nec sycophantiis nec fucis (2 and 3)/neque deprecatio perfidiis meis (4) nec malefactis (5) fuga est/nec confidentiae usquam est hospitium nec devorticulum dolis (6); /patent praestigiae (7) …
(530) nisi si aliquam corde machinor astutiam (8).

It is natural for *malus* too to denote this kind of clever trickery: in his final triumph Pseudolus is described as a mighty clever fellow, mighty versatile and cunning' (*nimis ille mortalis doctus, nimi' versutus, nimi' malus*) (1243), a veritable Ulysses,[7] who may well remind us of Cedric Whitman's celebration of *ponêros* and *ponêria* as the inheritance of Aristophanic comedy from the hero of the *Odyssey*.

And female *malitia*?[8] We cannot tell what the fragment from the opening of *Bacchides* is hinting at,[9] but the shameless courtesan of *Truculentus* proudly boasts (471–473):

If I am bad, I am bad thanks to my mother and my own badness,
pretending that I was pregnant as I did to the Babylonian soldier:
now I want the soldier to find this bad trick well worked out.

ego quod mala sum, matris opera mala sum et meapte malitia
quae me gravidam esse adsimulabam militi Babylonio.
eam nunc malitiam accuratam miles inveniat volo

Again at 810 when the indignant father-in-law calls Phronesium's trick *facinus muliebre* the cheeky maid comments;

this bad trick is more men's business than women's;
it's a man, not a woman, who made her pregnant.

magis pol haec malitia pertinet ad viros quam ad mulieres
vir illam, non mulier praegnatem fecit.

In these references we see how the abstract quality slides into the individual trick. Like slaves, women are subordinated in society and have to rely on trickery—*muliebris malitia*—to get their way. It is exceptional for a woman to be innocent of trickery (*expers malitiis*, Turpilius fr. 157, Ribbeck CRF ed. 3). As William Anderson puts it: 'a woman's bad-

[7] *Pseud.* 1244 *superavit dolum Troianum atque Ulixem Pseudolus*. Syrus in *Bacchides* and other cunning slaves often compare themselves to Ulysses.

[8] Pl. *Epid.* 546 *muliebris … malitia.*

[9] Pl. *Bac.* 54 *ne tibi lectus malitiam apud me suadeat.* Perhaps 'don't let the hope of bedding me persuade you to any trickery against me'.

ness has special positive value in Plautus' world', 'her typical female cleverness (*malitia*) a quality of all women in Plautus, slave and free'. Without being quite so universal we can endorse his comment on the enormous appeal to the audience of *malitia*, of being *malus* in this sense: 'the way Badness represents the personal response of every member of the audience, the will to explore, experience and enjoy what … authority figures brand as Bad, the so-called bad man/woman who pursues and achieves it, even if briefly, appears … a kind of paradigm of our pipe-dreams'.[10]

But although we cherish the memories of the tricky underdogs of comedy, we must allow for the fact that even Plautus can write scenes or whole plays which take a more lofty tone, deploring instead of celebrating deception and intrigue. There other words are used to stigmatize behavior as bad. Thus a man—particularly a young man—may simply be 'foolish or useless', *stultus inscitusque* (*Mil.* 736). As the business women of *Truculentus* point out (553): 'a lover can't help being worthless and wicked', *si quis amat nequit quin nihili sit atque improbus.* In particular both young men and slaves are stigmatized as worthless (*nihili* as in *Mil.* 248 *homo sectatus est nihili nequam bestiam*) or *nequam*, the opposite of virtuous and productive (*frugi: Mil.* 468, cf. *Bac.* 195 *nequam et miser.*) As in *Bac.* 195, *nequitia* (*Bac.* 112) is the quality of passive and lazy indulgence and *nequiter facere* (found in Cato, fr. 17) is that weak form of worthlessness most deprecated by fathers in their sons, as opposed to the more active wickedness condemned by the Paedagogus who calls the same young man actively bad (*pravus* and *improbus*, *Bac.* 413, 427, 552).

A happy accident—Gellius' interest in the meaning of *nequitia*—has preserved Scipio Aemilianus' invective against one Tiberius Asellus, which hinges on the dilemma that 'all bad deeds and scandalous offenses committed by men involve either deliberate badness or weak indulgence' (*omnia mala, probra, flagitia, quae homines faciunt in duabus rebus sunt, malitia atque nequitia*):[11] so if his adversary will not admit to *nequitia*, weak and extravagant debauchery, he must admit his *malitia.* Scipio's definition of *malitia* hinges on intention, marked both by deceptive language and conscious intent (Gellius 6.11.9):

> If you have schemed through deliberate statements, knowing and with full conscious knowledge, if this is so …[12]

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[10] Anderson 1993, 62; 77; 90.

[11] Aemilianus fr. 19 Malcovati, cited by Gellius 6.11.9.

[12] We may compare the fifth *locus* of the prosecution in Cic. *Inv.* 1.102, which

> si tu verbis conceptis coniuravisti sciens sciente animo tuo, si hoc ita est …

How many of these shades of badness could be covered by *kakos* and *kakia*?

This point is twice raised by Cicero's spokesmen in *de Finibus*. The Stoic Cato mentions (*Fin.* 3.39):

> shameful activities caused by vices (for the Greeks call them *kakiai*, but I prefer to call them vices rather than badnesses).

> turpes actiones quae oriuntur e vitiis (quas enim *kakias* Graeci appellant, vitia malo quam malitias nominare).

Cicero in reply commends his interlocutor's choice of *vitia*, which he derives from *vituperare*, to blame or scold, and thinks wider in reference and so more appropriate than *malitia* (*Fin.* 3.40):

> But if you translate *kakia* as *malitia* Latin usage would divert the meaning to a single specific fault: as it is, to every virtue there is an opposing vice with a contrasted name.

> sin KAKIAN malitiam dixisses, ad aliud nos unum certum vitium consuetudo Latina traduceret. nunc omni virtuti vitium contrario nomine opponitur.

Cicero returns to this argument in the *Tusculan disputations* using his new coinage *vitiositas* as an equivalent to *kakia* (*Tusc.* 4.34):[13]

> For I prefer to call what the Greeks call *kakia* by that name rather than *malitia*. *Malitia* is the name of a single specific vice, whereas *vitiositas* covers them all.

> Sic enim malo quam malitiam appellare eam quam Graeci KAKIAN appellant. nam malitia certi cuiusdam vitii nomen est, vitiositas omnium.

To confirm just what Cicero did understand by *kakia*, and how it differs from *malitia*, it is useful to compare the ethical vocabulary of Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*. There the regular terms for moral badness

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hinges on the offense being deliberate and calculated: *consulto et de industria factum* and a *voluntarium maleficium*. *Malitia* itself occurs in the reprise of the *loci* at *Inv.* 2.108: *adversarius autem malefacta augebit: nihil imprudenter, sed omnia ex crudelitate et malitia facta dicet* ('he will say nothing was done unwittingly, but every act was prompted by cruelty and trickery').

[13] *TLL* has not reached *vitiositas* or *vitium*, but *OLD*, which cites *Fin.* 3.39 under *Vitia* 4, notes Cicero's introduction and definition of *vitiositas* at *Tusc.* 4.29. It is a proclivity—*habitus aut adfectatio in tota vita inconstans et a se ipsa dissentiens*. The point of his (difficult, as he admits) discussion, is to distinguish between proclivities and permanent moral conditions. Thus *vitiositas* is more harmless than actual 'permanent flaws of character' (*vitia enim adfectationes sunt manentes*) (4.30). This does not make the use in 4.34 any clearer.

are the familiar everyday language of comedy, *ponêros/ponêria* and more commonly *mokhthêros, mokhthêria* (3.5.1113b and *passim*). Men are judged to be *adikos* through deliberate harmful actions to others (*kakourgein*), or *akolastos* out of self-indulgence (1114a6), but they are responsible for failing to impose good behavior on themselves: 'vices of the soul' *kakiai tês psukhês* are comparable to physical flaws (*kakiai tou sômatos*), translated by Ostwald as 'vices of the body' (1114a20–22). So is singular *kakia* 'vice'? When we look for an Aristotelian equivalent of *malitia* in legal contexts we will find *kakia* both used and avoided.

Before returning to Cicero we must look back at an intervening stage in the history of this concept. With Terence *malitia* seems to meet only disapproval. Not only are his plays far more dominated by authority figures and young men who despite their offenses still respect authority: any kind of deception has rather a thin time of it. Thus *dolus*, the basic word for deception, occurs six times in *Andria* but not at all in *Heautontimoroumenos, Phormio*, or *Hecyra*. In *Andria* Davus can still invoke female *malitia* at 722–723 'Mysis, now I need you to bring out your badness and cleverness for this business' (*Mysis, nunc opus est tua/mihi ad hanc rem exprompta malitia atque astutia*). We might compare *Hecyra* 203, where the old man unfairly claims women are 'all trained to badness in the same school' (*in eodem omnes … ludo doctae ad malitiam*). But there is little or no boasting of *malitia*. Even *Phormio*, the play with the most calculating fraudster, speaks only with disapproval of this kind of cleverness (273–274; 358–359; 658–659):

> If by chance someone relying on his own cleverness
> has laid traps for our youth …
>
> See the harm done by greed!
> :: if you accuse our master of cleverness you'll hear yourself abused!
>
> I don't know whether to say this fellow is acting from stupidity or cleverness,
> knowingly or unawares.
>
> si quis forte malitia fretus sua
> insidias nostrae fecit adulescentiae …
>
> vide avaritia quid facit!
> :: si erum insimulabis malitiae male audies.[14]

[14] Here Donatus reads *avaritiae*, but probably under the influence of the preceding line. The slave is making a different point: 'if you accuse our master of bad intent', i.e. of pretending the girl's claim is false from a bad motive. Here *malitia* comes close to the concept of *dolo malo* discussed below.

utrum stultitia facere ego hunc an *malitia*
dicam, scientem an imprudentem, incertus sum.[15]

3. *A special form of* malitia: *exact observance of the law*

The higher moral tone sought by Terence easily explains the absence of positively viewed *malitia*, but there is also reason to think that a legal development is contributing to the diminished frequency of the word itself. In *Heautontimoroumenos* 796 the wily slave Syrus warns Chremes in proverbial terms against standing on his legal rights:

The proverb is true, Chremes,
extreme (or exact) observance of the law is extreme fraud.

verum illud, Chremes,
dicunt, 'ius summum saepe summast malitia'.

Was this a Greek idea? Not in the same abstract formulation, for the sentiment is expressed quite differently in Menander, fr. 545 Koerte: 'The man who observes the laws too accurately (*lian akribôs*) is seen/shown up as a tricky litigator' (*sukophantês phainetai*). This is the counterpart of many cases where Plautus associates *sukophantês*, *sukophantein* with more general fraudulence or trickery. The Terentian sykophant is true to the Attic model who typically prosecutes with a bad motive, using dishonest methods. But *lian akribôs* is interestingly close to Aristotle's contrast between the *akribodikaios* and the *epieikês* in *Nicomachean Ethics* 5.10.1138a. *Akribodikaios* is rare, but consistent with Aristotle's earlier condemnation of *akribologia* in calculating other men's debts as *mikroprepes*.

As Kornhardt has shown, *summum ius* must represent this often malicious precision of extreme legalism. The idioms *summum ius* and *summo iure* occur four times in Cicero's early speeches,[16] but for the canonical precept *summum ius summa iniuria* we must turn to Cicero's *de Officiis*. Cicero has been arguing that it is sometimes right to break an agreement to avoid injustice, and that many cases are exonerated by prae-

[15] For the antithesis between ignorant *stultitia* and knowing *malitia* see also *Rhet. Her.* 4.40 *consulum sive stultitiam sive malitiam dicere oportet sive utrumque*, and Quintilian 9.3.88 *sive me malitiam sive stultitiam dicere oportet*, apparently a translation of Demosthenes 18.20 εἴτε χρὴ κακίαν εἴτε ἄγνοιαν εἴτε καὶ ἀμφότερα ταῦτα εἰπεῖν.

[16] Kornhardt 1953. *Quinct.* 38, *Ver.* 2.3.192 and 5.4, and *Caec.*10.

torian edict or the laws themselves. However injustices also arise from *calumnia* (abuse of legal process) and (*Off.* 1.10):

> a too clever interpretation of the law … the origin of the hackneyed proverb 'exact law is extreme injustice'.
>
> †nimis callida sed†[17] malitiosa iuris interpretatione. ex quo illud 'summum ius/summa iniuria', factum est iam tritum sermone proverbium.

If the proverb can be called hackneyed in the 40s: was it already known when Terence wrote, and was Terence offering a poetic variation, as Kornhardt argues and Dyck suggests in his commentary?

Syrus' use of *malitia* in his warning to Menedemus (*Hau.* 796), above, p. 327, seems to precede or foreshadow an equivalent concept, *dolus malus*, which was not given formal recognition until almost a hundred years later.

4. *The eclipse of* malitia *and triumph of* dolus malus

While *dolus* itself recedes from Terence's plays after *Andria*, there is one special occurrence in *Eunuchus*: the straight man Chremes whose role it is to establish the identity of the lost citizen girl reports his suspicions of Thais as contriving a trick against the soldier or perhaps himself (*Eu.* 515):

> I was already suspicious
> that all this was being staged as a trick.
>
> iam tum erat suspicio
> dolo malo haec fieri omnia.

Now according to Donatus' comment on this line the apparently superfluous addition of *malus* to the noun *dolus*,[18] itself meaning fraud, was an archaism already found in the Twelve Tables (cf. fr. 4, *ROL* II). Just how old was this idiom? We have one case in Plautus, in a context where the playwright has introduced some legal absurdities to enliven the Greek dialogue.

A shipwreck in Plautus' *Rudens* brings the trinket chest of a kidnapped girl into the hands of a slave fisherman Gripus. But the girl's

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[17] Although Reynolds' OCT obelizes *nimis callida sed*, he does not doubt the authenticity of *malitiosa*. On the opposition of *malitiosa interpretatio* to *benigna interpretatio*, which applies the principle of charity, see Wubbe 1972, used in Sluiter 1998.

[18] I do not have access to the dissertation of ter Beek 2000 on *dolus*.

kidnapper wants to recover the chest, and in a sparring dialogue with Gripus pretends to accept the fisherman's formal *stipulatio*, a contract to give him a 'great silver talent' in return for the treasure chest. Gripus is wily and makes the kidnapper bind himself by an oath (1338–1344, reinforced by a penalty clause 1345–1349). Attempting to wriggle out of this contract the kidnapper demands to go to arbitration (*Rud.* 1380–1382):

> give me a private judge,
> unless you made the contract in bad faith or I am still
> a minor under twenty-five.
>
> cedo quicum habeo iudicem
> ni dolo malo instipulatus sis sive etiamdum siem
> quinque et viginti annos natus.

Both clauses are nonsensical, indeed since the slave has no legal persona and the kidnapper is not the rightful owner of the chest the whole scene is a legal absurdity, resolved when Gripus appeals to his master, the girl's still unidentified father, to serve as judge. But this Plautine embellishment of Diphilus' Greek action is the first surviving context for the notion of bad faith.

Brent Shaw kindly pointed out to me a real-life incidence of the same phrase in a contract in Cato's *de Agri Cultura* 144. The men contracting to harvest the olives are to take an oath:

> All shall swear before the master or overseer that they have not stolen any olives nor has anyone *with their complicity* stolen from the olive harvest on the farm of T. Manlius. Whoever shall not have sworn in this way, no one will pay cash for all that he has gathered nor shall it be owed. Let security be given to the satisfaction of T. Manlius that the olives have been correctly gathered.
>
> omnes iuranto ad dominum aut ad custodem sese oleam non surripuisse neque quemquam *suo dolo malo* ex oletate ex fundo T Manli. qui eorum non ita iuraverit, quod is legerit omne, pro eo argentum nemo dabit neque debebitur. oleam cogi recte satis dato arbitratu T. Manli.[19]

As with the allusion to the Twelve Tables in Donatus' comment on Terence *Eunuchus* 515, these ancient legal texts are known to have been modified and updated during the Republic, and cannot be used to provide a trustworthy date for the first use of the idiom. It is more

[19] The phrase *suo dolo malo* is repeated in the contract of *Agr.* 145.

than likely that the legal documents cited in the later chapters of *de Agri Cultura* were added to Cato's original treatise some time after its composition.

5. Dolus malus /dolo malo *in civil law and ethical argument*

To what extent does *dolus malus* supersede *malitia?* To what extent are they actually equivalent? Its absence from the two *loci* of accusation in *de Inventione* (note 12 above) suggests that the notion of malicious intent was Roman in its origin, rather than coming into Roman law and rhetoric from Greek thinking. But they may have been natural and parallel developments. Here another passage from Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* may be helpful.

In *EN* 5.8 Aristotle has been distinguishing levels of responsibility between harm caused by chance, harm caused in error, and deliberately harmful acts. If harm is caused that could have been expected, but *aneu kakias* (translated by Ostwald as 'without malice'), it counts as a blunder, but if a man acts on a deliberate decision he is unjust and bad (*mokhthêros*: 1135b25). That is why acts provoked by anger are rightly judged not to be committed *ek pronoias* (translated by Ostwald as 'with malice aforethought') (1135b26–31):

> For the angry man is not in control … The situation is not like contracts where the dispute is one of facts, so that one of the parties must be bad (*mokhthêros*), unless they are disputing out of forgetfulness or ignorance.
>
> οὐ γὰρ ἄρχει ὁ θυμῷ ποιῶν … οὐ γὰρ ὥσπερ ἐν τοῖς συναλλάγμασι περὶ τοῦ γενέσθαι ἀμφισβητοῦσιν, ὧν ἀνάγκη τὸν ἕτερον εἶναι μοχθηρόν, ἂν μὴ διὰ λήθην αὐτὸ δρῶσιν·

Here indeed *kakia* seems to correspond to *malitia*, and we can see how *sine omni malitia* may have originated in Plautus' Greek originals.[20] But where Romans stress the element of deceit (*dolus, fraus* etc.) Aristotle is focused on the cognitive condition of the agent—we get the 'aforethought' but not the malice. Only a reference two sentences later to one party as 'plotting against the other' (*epibouleusas*, 1135b33) touches on the element of deception dominant in Roman thinking.

[20] This seems to be the force of *malitia* in Quint. 3.8.44 *Sic Catilina apud Sallustium loquitur ut rem scelestissimam* non malitia sed indignatione *videatur audere*. Russell translates 'not … out of wickedness'.

If formal recognition of *dolus malus* only dates to Aquilius Gallus, the praetor of 66 BCE, this may explain why Cicero still uses *malitia* to denote fraud in his early speeches. It is not apparent from the bare quotations of the *Thesaurus*[21] just how insistently Cicero plays on the comic associations of the word. Dealing with Fannius' charge of fraud against the actor Roscius, Cicero exploits the theatrical context of the lawsuit, associating Fannius with the Plautine trickster Ballio, and three times denounces his *malitia*, linking it with *fraus*.[22] He uses the same word to attack the trickery of Verres' defending counsel Hortensius (*Ver.* 1.55) in seeking to delay the trial, and condemn his henchman Apronius' fraud of the Sicilian corn dealers (*Ver.* 2.2.66). In 67 BCE Cicero tries to exonerate Cluentius from a past condemnation by charging his old antagonist with turning 'to fraud and trickery' (*ad omnem fraudem et malitiam*) (*Clu.* 70), and calls him 'a mass of fraud and lies, seasoning his deceit with deliberate and skillful trickery' (*totus ex fraude et mendaciis factus studio et artificio quodam malitiae condivisset*) (*Clu.* 72).

After this, *malitia* seems to drop out of the speeches, though it occurs in informal letters in the milder sense of witty or sly deception. We saw that *malitia* occurs in Cicero's later treatises, but it is absent from legal contexts. Instead Cicero twice invokes Aquilius Gallus' definition of *dolus malus*, first in *de Natura Deorum* 3.74, then in *de Officiis* 3.60.

In *de Natura Deorum* Cicero's main theme is the calculated misuse of man's god-given reason (*ratio*) for self-interest, and he illustrates it first from comedy, quoting the unidentified young man whose father's generosity has paradoxically deprived him of all his *doli*, *fallaciae*, and *praestigiae* (*N.D.* 3.72). Next, he moves from the theater to the courts (*exeamus e theatro, veniamus in forum*, 3.74), discussing the origin of various types of civil charge, including first 'breaches of faith in other cases arising from purchase or sale or rental or hire' (*reliqua quae ex empto aut vendito aut conducto aut locato contra fidem fiunt*) then, or rather hence (*N.D.* 3.74):

[21] I have benefited in this exploration from the republican examples cited by *TLL* VIII, 187–189 *s.v. malitia*, also 189–190 *s.v. malitiosus/malitiose*, and from *TLL* V *s.v. dolus malus*; I have also consulted the author-specific concordances.

[22] *Q. Rosc.* 20–21 'Don't his head and eyebrows smell of deceitfulness and shout of cunning? I can hardly see a reason why he would have thought Roscius his like in fraud and deceitfulness … it seems plausible that Fannius acted in deceitfulness and Roscius was deceived unawares' (*nonne ipsum caput et supercilia … olere malitiam et clamitare calliditatem videntur? … qui quam ob rem Roscium similem sui in fraude et malitia existimarit, mihi* ⟨*vix*⟩ *videtur…* (21) *verisimile videtur et Fannium per malitiam fecisse et Roscium per imprudentiam deceptum esse*).

> That clean sweep of all trickery, the procedure of *Dolus malus*, which our friend C. Aquilius formulated, which Aquilius considered to be proven when there was a discrepancy between what was claimed and what had occurred.
>
> inde everriculum malitiarum omnium, iudicium de dolo malo, quod C. Aquilius, familiaris noster, protulit, quem dolum idem Aquilius tum teneri putat, cum aliud sit simulatum, aliud actum.

Notice that Cicero calls the formula *de dolo malo* the clean-sweep or comprehensive remedy of all types of *malitia*. He follows this (predictably) by linking *malitia* to the power of deception. If the gods gave men reason, then they gave them *malitia*, for *malitia* is reason twisted and used to deceive, so it was the same gods who gave men reason and gave them fraud (3.75): *est enim malitia versuta et fallax ratio nocendi; idem etiam di fraudem dederunt*. But the fault lies with men who misuse this gift of the gods.

Cicero discusses this kind of contractual fraud at greater length in the third book of *de Officiis*. Indeed it is a *Leitmotif*[23] for most of this book, which Cicero did not adapt from Panaetius but added on the basis of his own experience, and experience of the courts at that. To conceal the faults of an object for sale is not the act of a straightforward, gentlemanly and just person, but of a twisted tricky fellow (3.57: *versuti … obscuri astuti fallacis malitiosi callidi veteratoris vafri*). When Pythias deceived Canius into buying his seaside villa in Syracuse by bribing fishermen to give the impression that it was a good fishing ground, Canius had no recourse, because Aquilius had not yet published his formulae *de dolo malo*, which he himself defined as *cum aliud esset simulatum, aliud actum*. So Pythias and all those who behave like him, *aliud simulantes aliud agentes*, are *perfidi improbi malitiosi*. Cicero pauses to consider whether this is as much a matter of omission (3.64 *dissimulatio*, 'concealment'), as of commission (*simulatio*, 'pretense'). As Andrew Dyck has noted in his thorough commentary on this passage, Ulpian (*Dig.* 4.3.1.2) confirms that Cicero's contemporary Servius Sulpicius was still defining *dolus malus* in Aquilius' terms as *machinationem quandam alterius decipiendi causa, cum aliud*

[23] Cicero's concern with deliberate dishonesty begins at 3.37. After the section from 3.57–60, compare 3.61 *dolus malus … agi dolose aut malitiose*, and at 3.71 'we must eliminate clever deceits, and that kind of trickiness which wants to appear as prudence' (*astutiae tollendae sunt eaque malitia quae vult illa quidem videri prudentiam*) 'There is no worse ruin in life than the pretense of understanding in a state of deceitfulness' (*nec ulla pernicies vitae maior inveniri potest quam in malitia simulatio intelligentiae*). The evil of such false cleverness is illustrated by the extended contrast of Ulysses and Regulus in 3.96–115.

simulatur et aliud agitur, and it was left to Labeo in the next generation to raise doubts; firstly that one can contrive to cheat a man without active pretense—*posse autem et sine simulatione id agi ut quis circumveniatur*, and secondly that a man can follow a different intention from what he pretended without *dolus malus*, as men do simply to protect either their own or other men's property through this kind of suppression: *posse et sine dolo malo aliud agi, aliud simulari, sicuti faciunt qui per eiusmodi dissimulationem deserviunt et tuentur vel sua vel aliena.*[24]

It was not the pretense, then, but the motive that mattered. Labeo redefined by omitting the notion of pretense and including the intention of cheating along with the fact of deception: *dolus malus* was now (*ibid.*):

> any clever trick or deception or contrivance applied to cheat, trick or deceive another …
>
> omnem calliditatem fallaciam machinationem ad circumveniendum fallendum decipiendum alterum adhibitam …

Even here Labeo's version of *dolus malus* is close to the *malitia* cherished by comedy: both concepts are narrower than simple *kakia*.

6. *Conclusion*

I have argued that *malitia* was to some extent defined, perhaps even limited, by its prominence in the comic display of Plautus' virtuoso clever slave (or woman). *Malitia* was his or her prerogative. And even in Cicero's private and public speeches, *malitia* is portrayed as the characteristic of his antagonist and associates in order to color the opposite side with the baseness of low-lifes, the contemptible if entertaining absurdity of the comic figures which Aristotle calls *phauloteroi* (*Poetics* 1449a32). Perhaps the same slave associations led speakers to avoid predicating *malitia* of their social equals and reach for a more neutral legal concept. Certainly the legal tool of *dolus malus* provided the crucial (and unanswerable) notion of intent which Romans needed for their lawsuits and business contracts. I suggest that *malitia* faded from public discourse, and took refuge in the world of friendly wit and play[25] just

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[24] Labeo *Dig.* 4.3.1.2.

[25] Like modern Italian *malizioso*, *malitia* and *malitiosus* express teasing admiration for wit, absolving the addressee from any serious hostile intent, in e.g. Cicero's letters to

because the Romans saw the greater usefulness of *dolus malus* and took it to their hearts.

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Paetus, *Fam.* 9.19.1 'you haven't abandoned your malicious wit: you imply that Balbus was content with a most modest display' (*tamen a malitia non discedis. tenuiculo apparatu significas Balbum fuisse contentum*).

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

'THE MIND OF AN ASS AND THE IMPUDENCE OF A DOG': A SCHOLAR GONE BAD

Cynthia Damon

> *'... the intellectual power of great scholars ... their moral principles of absolute honesty and unremitting patience in the pursuit of truth'.*
>
> *Rudolf Pfeiffer,* History of Classical Scholarship, *vii*

1. *Introduction*

Apion, the scholar of the title, was a first-century CE success story. By birth he was an Egyptian, by training a teacher and scholar of Greek literature. But despite his Egyptian origin he earned the coveted citizenship of Alexandria, and despite his philological profession he led an embassy to Gaius seeking to stir that emperor's wrath against his adopted city's Jewish population. Apion also claimed to have conferred with Homer's shade and to possess the true story about the poet's much-disputed birthplace, though he never revealed it.

As even this very brief sketch suggests, Apion raised eyebrows in antiquity. He also raised tempers and attracted the attention of the great. His sobriquet *cymbalum mundi* 'the world's gong', for example, was bestowed upon him by the emperor Tiberius. The present chapter, in the context of a volume on κακία 'badness', asks what made Apion so provoking to so many.

After a brief look at Apion's life (section 2) and reputation (section 3), consideration is given to his philological work, again briefly (section 4). The scant and discordant remains of his five-book account of Egypt require a more thorough discussion (sections 5 and 6). The final section addresses the question of why the ancient reputation of this apparently successful scholar was so multifariously and persistently bad. Rather a different picture emerges here than that offered recently by Kenneth

Jones:[1] 'a multi-faceted scholar and man who devoted his life to various studies' with 'celebrity justly won by his brilliance'.

2. *Μόχθος?*

The *Suda* entry on Apion offers a fairly standard—for the *Suda*—blend of fact, confusion, error, and puzzles. Also omissions. But it is a convenient place to begin (*Suda* α 3215):

> Apion, son of Pleistonices, called 'Drudge'. An Egyptian (but according to Heliconius, a Cretan). Grammarian, pupil of Apollonius the son of Archibius. Also studied with Euphranor, then an old man (in fact, more than 100 years old). Raised in the household of Didymus the Great. Taught in Rome under Tiberius Caesar and Claudius. Took over from the grammarian Theon. Contemporary of Dionysius of Halicarnassus. Wrote a history organized by nation and some other works.[2]
>
> Ἀπίων, ὁ Πλειστονίκου, ὁ ἐπικληθεὶς Μόχθος, Αἰγύπτιος, κατὰ δὲ Ἑλικώνιον Κρής, γραμματικός, μαθητὴς Ἀπολλωνίου τοῦ Ἀρχιβίου. ἠκηκόει δὲ καὶ Εὐφράνορος γηραιοῦ καὶ ὑπὲρ ρ' ἔτη γεγονότος, Διδύμου δὲ τοῦ μεγάλου θρεπτός. ἐπαίδευσε δὲ ἐπὶ Τιβερίου Καίσαρος καὶ Κλαυδίου ἐν Ῥώμῃ. ἦν δὲ διάδοχος Θέωνος τοῦ γραμματικοῦ καὶ σύγχρονος Διονυσίου τοῦ Ἁλικαρνασέως. ἔγραψεν ἱστορίαν κατ' ἔθνος καὶ ἄλλα τινά.

There is confusion even in the innocuous opening of this entry: ὁ Πλειστονίκου, 'son of Pleistonices'. Πλειστονίκης was an epithet applied to Apion himself, not his father's name: thus in the elder Pliny, who had seen Apion, and in Gellius.[3] Neither author tells us whether Πλειστονίκης is a compound of νίκη 'victory' or of νεῖκος 'strife', i.e., whether it means 'supreme champion' or 'supremely contentious'; for discussion see section 3.

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[1] Jones 2005, 281 n. 7.

[2] Except where otherwise noted, translations are my own.

[3] Plin. *Nat.* 37.75 *Apion cognominatus Plistonices* 'Apion surnamed Plistonices'; likewise in Book 1 on the external authorities for Book 36: *Apione Plistonice* 'from Apion Plistonices'. Gel. 5.14.1 *qui 'Plistonices' appellatus est*; 7.8.1 *qui Πλειστονείκης appellatus est*, both meaning 'who was called "Plistonices"'). For the inscription Ἀπίων πλειστονίκης ἤκουσα τρίς 'I, Apion Pleistonices, heard [*sc.* the voice] thrice' on the 'talking' Colossus of Memnon see Bernand 1960, 164–165. The report of Sextus Julius Africanus, a third-century chronographer used by Eusebius in the fourth century and George Syncellus in the ninth (see *FGrHist* 616 T 3), that Apion's father's name was Poseidonius is suspect since Africanus has no other independent evidence about Apion.

Apion's other acquired name, Μόχθος 'Drudge', is even less flattering than the unflattering sobriquets reflecting the laborious scholarship of his foster-father (or teacher; see below) Didymus, called 'Book-forgetting' (βιβλιολάθης) for having written so much as to forget what he had said in earlier books, and 'Bronze-guts' (χαλκέντερος), presumably for his ability to stay put at his desk.[4] While 'Drudge' lacks the admiring hyperbole accorded Didymus, some other sources speak positively of Apion's scholarly credentials.[5] Gellius, for example, describes him as 'rich in matters literary' and credits him with 'a large and varied knowledge of things Greek' (5.14.1 *litteris homo multis praeditus rerumque Graecarum plurima atque varia scientia*; cf. 6.8.1 *eruditi viri* 'of an erudite man' and 7.8.1 *facili atque alacri facundia fuit* 'he was equipped with a ready and eager eloquence'), while for Tatian he is 'the grammarian Apion, a man of the highest repute' (*ad Gr.* 39.13–14 Ἀπίων ὁ γραμματικὸς ἀνὴρ δοκιμώτατος). The disparaging note sounded by the *Suda*'s 'Drudge', however, is also heard in the words of the younger Seneca, who took a dim view of one of Apion's contributions to the study of Homer (*Ep.* 88.40, quoted in section 4), and of Sextus Julius Africanus, who calls Apion 'the most frivolous of grammarians' (Eus. *PE* 10.10.16 περιεργότατος γραμματικῶν).

Next comes Apion's Egyptian origin, which also figures prominently in Josephus and is noted by the elder Pliny and Tatian.[6] 'Cretan', however, is a puzzle. Why a Cretan? And how does Heliconius, who was a Byzantine chronicler of the fourth century CE, know? See further in section 5.

The professional label γραμματικός 'grammarian' in the *Suda* entry is also applied to Apion by Seneca, Pliny, and Josephus in the first century CE, and by Tatian, Athenaeus, and Clement of Alexandria in

[4] *Suda* δ 872: διὰ τὴν περὶ τὰ βιβλία ἐπιμονήν 'for his steadfastness where books were concerned'.

[5] Μόχθος is also predicated of Apion in the *Suda* entry for a pupil (see n. 11), as well as at A.D. *Synt.* 124.9 and Σ Ar. *Pax* 778.

[6] Jos. *Ap.* 2.28 ὁ Αἰγύπτιος Ἀπίων 'the Egyptian Apion', 2.29 γεγενημένος ἐν Ὀάσει τῆς Αἰγύπτου, πάντων Αἰγυπτίων πρῶτος ὤν, ὡς ἂν εἴποι τις 'with an origin in Egypt's Oasis, top-quality Egyptian, so to speak', 2.41 γεννηθεὶς ... ἐν τῷ βαθυτάτῳ τῆς Αἰγύπτου 'born in the depths of Egypt', 2.65 *cum vos sitis Aegyptii* 'though you are Egyptians', 2.85 *apud ipsos* 'in that [*sc.* dog-worshipping] country of theirs', 2.137 ἵν' αὐτὸς αὐτοῦ καὶ τῶν ἄλλων Αἰγυπτίων ᾖ ὁ κατηγορῶν 'that he himself bring charges against himself and the other Egyptians', 2.138 αὐτὸν ἐξήλεγξεν ὄντα τὸ γένος Αἰγύπτιον 'he convicted himself of being Egyptian by birth'. Cf. also the references to Apion's defense (or betrayal) of his native race and customs in n. 65.

the second and third centuries.[7] The remaining details about Apion's philological training are more problematic. It is hard to know whether to call 'pupil of Apollonius the son of Archibius' fact, confusion, or error.[8] What we do know is that this Apollonius, who is usually called 'Sophistes', used Apion's lexical work in his own Homeric lexicon, quoting him by name more than 150 times.[9] The identity of the elderly Euphranor with whom Apion also studied is another puzzle, irrelevant for our purposes.[10] The next name is that of the aforementioned Didymus, who was active from the time of Cicero through the triumviral period and into the reign of Augustus. Θρεπτός ought to mean that Apion was a home-born slave or a foundling raised as a slave (LSJ *s.v.* I), but if it means either it is hard to see why Josephus avoided so obvious a source of insults, or how he could have known that Apion's hometown was the great Siwa Oasis (*Ap.* 2.3), or where the name of his father came from, if 'son of Poseidonius' has any authority (see n. 3). But θρεπτός can also mean 'pupil' (LSJ *s.v.* II), which would fit here.

From Apion as pupil the entry turns to Apion as teacher, singling out his activity in Rome under Tiberius and Claudius.[11] But the next sentence puts him back in his Alexandrian setting, where he was successor to Theon as head of the Library, carrying on the philological work

[7] Sen. *Ep.* 88.40, Plin. index to *Nat.* 35, Jos. *Ap.* 2.2, 2.12, 2.14, 2.15, 2.109; cf. 2.26 ἡ γραμματικὴ μετάθεσις 'the grammarian's alteration', Tatian *ad Gr.* 39.13–14, Athen. 7.294f, Clement of Alexandria (see *FGrHist* T 11.b). Also Jerome (see *FGrHist* T 4.c).

[8] Emendations shed little light: see Henrichs and Müller 1976, 27 n. 1.

[9] According to Neitzel 1977, 206 n. 66 only 132 of these are genuine Apionic material; the others are drawn from works attributed to Apion in antiquity but not genuine (see n. 28).

[10] The best known bearer of the name, Euphranor of Corinth, was an artist and writer on art who worked during the fourth century BCE. Even extending his life to 100+ years he cannot have overlapped with Apion. The editors of the on-line *Suda* label him 'otherwise unattested' (www.stoa.org/sol under α 3215: viewed 2/5/07), but there is a possibly relevant Euphranor who wrote on the accentuation of Homeric words and is cited in a context that also mentions Apion (Eust. *ad Il.* 992.55–60). He is dated in the on-line *Lessico dei grammatici greci antichi* to 'sometime before Herodian' on the basis of a citation in the second-century CE grammarian Aelius Herodianus (one of only two testimonia there quoted for Euphranor). The present *Suda* entry is not mentioned; if relevant it would place this Euphranor's career in the first century BCE (www.aristarchus.unige.it/lgga/ under Euphranor; viewed 2/5/07).

[11] Cf. *Suda* α 2634: Ἀντέρως· ἀκουστὴς δὲ ἦν Ἀπίωνος τοῦ Μόχθου 'Anteros: he was a pupil of Apion the Drudge'. Anteros was himself a grammarian; he taught in Rome under Claudius.

of Apollonius of Byzantium and Aristarchus, a succession that Alan Cameron dates to 'around 20 CE'.[12] The synchronism with Dionysius of Halicarnassus is a stretch: their lives may have overlapped by a few years, but Apion was active a generation or two after Dionysius, who arrived in Rome shortly after the battle of Actium.

Ἱστορία κατ' ἔθνος 'history organized by nation' is the most vexing puzzle here; it ought to be capable of solution, but it hasn't yet been solved, at least not to my satisfaction. Titles for half a dozen of Apion's works are known,[13] but the work singled out here is mentioned nowhere else under this title, and, if it is a description rather than a title, none of the works attributed to Apion easily fits it.[14] The entry concludes with another puzzle, in that Apion's other books, some of which were 'well known' according to Gellius (5.14.2 *non incelebres*), have to be lumped into 'and some other works' (καὶ ἄλλα τινά).[15]

From the *Suda*, then, we learn that Apion was by birth an Egyptian and by training a grammarian, that he worked hard, wrote books, and was active in both Alexandria and Rome during the first half of the first century CE.

The *Suda* does not mention the award of Alexandrian citizenship that led Athenaeus to call him 'Apion the Alexandrian' (1.16e Ἀπίων ὁ Ἀλεξανδρεύς; cf. Jos. *Ap.* 2.29 Ἀλεξανδρεὺς … καταψευδόμενος 'passing himself off as Alexandrian', 2.41 λέγων αὑτὸν Ἀλεξανδρέα 'calling himself Alexandrian', also 2.49) and Gellius to label him 'a Greek' (7.8.1 *Graecus homo*). Josephus adds that Apion was so confident of his deserts that he congratulated Alexandria on having acquired so fine a citizen as himself (*Ap.* 2.135 μακαρίζει τὴν Ἀλεξάνδρειαν, ὅτι τοιοῦτον ἔχει πολίτην

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[12] Cameron 1995, 191 n. 33.

[13] Secure titles for Apion's works: τὰ Αἰγυπτιακά '*Egyptian affairs*'; γλῶσσαι Ὁμηρικαί '*Homeric glosses*'; περὶ τῆς Ἀπικίου τρυφῆς '*Concerning the luxuriousness of Apicius*' (1 fragment); περὶ τῆς Ῥωμαϊκῆς διαλέκτου '*Concerning the Latin language*' (1 fragment); περὶ μάγου '*On a mage*' (?) (1 fragment); ἱστορία κατ' ἔθνος '*History organized by nation*' (0? fragments). Bremmer 2005, 322 usefully lists papyri containing Apionic scholia on Alcaeus, Simonides, and perhaps other authors. See also n. 39.

[14] The phrase κατ' ἔθνος is unparalleled in the *Suda*. The translation 'organized by nation', which is that of Malcolm Heath in the on-line *Suda*, takes κατά distributively. The editors of this volume, noting that the distributive is more natural with a plural object, suggest the translation 'based on or in accordance with his (own) ἔθνος', which would be a reference to Apion's work on Egypt. This is neat, but the absence of the reflexive makes the reference, if such it be, quite oblique.

[15] Neither of these puzzles is addressed in the present chapter.

'he congratulates Alexandria on possessing such a citizen').[16] Josephus is also the fullest source for Apion's leading role in the Alexandrians' embassy to Gaius in the wake of bloody riots that threatened to turn the emperor's attention to the task of making that restive city peaceable (*AJ* 18.257):[17]

> After an occasion of civil strife in Alexandria between the Jews who lived there and the Greeks, from each of the factions three delegates were chosen and appeared before Gaius. One of the Alexandrian delegates was Apion, who said outrageous things (ἐβλασφήμησεν) about the Jews, asserting among many other things that they neglected to pay the honors due to Caesar.
>
> καὶ δὴ στάσεως ἐν Ἀλεξανδρείᾳ γενομένης Ἰουδαίων τε οἳ ἐνοικοῦσι καὶ Ἑλλήνων τρεῖς ἀφ' ἑκατέρας τῆς στάσεως πρεσβευταὶ αἱρεθέντες παρῆσαν ὡς τὸν Γάιον. καὶ ἦν γὰρ τῶν Ἀλεξανδρέων πρέσβεων εἷς Ἀπίων, ὃς πολλὰ εἰς τοὺς Ἰουδαίους ἐβλασφήμησεν ἄλλα τε λέγων καὶ ὡς τῶν Καίσαρος τιμῶν περιορῷεν.

Further discussion of what made Apion antiquity's most infamous Jew-hater is given in section 6.

Much-cited author, head of the Library, conversant with emperors: Apion was clearly a figure of international renown, buzzing from Alexandria to Rome and Rome to Alexandria, frequenting the highest scholarly and social circles. Hardly what we would call a drudge. Perhaps 'an academic jet-setter'?[18]

3. Cymbalum mundi

In Josephus' reaction to Apion's boast about his value to Alexandria—he calls it 'a most amazing thing' (θαυμασιώτατον) and says that Alexandria deserves pity if she preens herself on Apion (*Ap.* 2.135–136

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[16] Jacobson 2000 sees here emulation of Cicero, who congratulated Rome on its rebirth in the year of his consulship.

[17] According to Josephus, his aim was inflammatory: *AJ* 18.259 πολλὰ δὲ καὶ χαλεπὰ Ἀπίωνος εἰρηκότος, ὑφ' ὧν ἀρθῆναι ἤλπιζε τὸν Γάιον καὶ εἰκὸς ἦν '… Apion having spoken many angry words by which he hoped that Gaius would be roused, a reasonable expectation'. Other accounts of the embassy are given by Apion's opposite number, Philo, the lead ambassador for the Alexandrian Jews, in his *in Flaccum* and *de Legatione in Gaium*. Philo, in whose view Gaius' reception of the Jewish embassy was insultingly dismissive (*Leg.* 360 τὸ πρᾶγμα μιμεία τις ἦν 'the affair was a farce'), does not mention Apion.

[18] So Haslam 1994, 28 n. 82.

quoted in part in n. 64)—we get the first indication of Apion's provocative effect.

From Pliny and others we get more reactions. Apion was one of the hundreds of authors from whose works Pliny culled material for his *Natural History*. But Apion was also a contemporary—an older contemporary—and Pliny reports that the man 'was seen by me in my youth' (*Nat.* 30.99 *adulescentibus nobis visus Apion*). Perhaps in Rome, where Pliny, born in 23 or 24 CE, was getting his education in the 30s and early 40s.[19] Pliny provides our earliest secure references to the cognomen Πλειστονίκης, or, in Latin, Plistonicus.[20] Howard Jacobson (1977) argues that Pleistonices means 'supremely contentious' (a sort of 'super-Polynices') and is therefore an epithet applied to Apion by his detractors (of whom he had many) rather than a self-bestowed 'supreme champion', an epithet more suited to a victor in athletic contests than to a scholar who has carried his point.[21] It may perhaps be relevant that Josephus labels those who would dispute his claims about the antiquity of his people—Apion, of course, among them—as φιλόνεικοι 'lovers of contention' (*Ap.* 1.160). Be that as it may, in either 'supreme champion' or 'supremely contentious' the 'supreme' part harmonizes nicely with Apion's propensity for attracting attention, attested in the sobriquet bestowed on him by Tiberius, *cymbalum mundi* 'the world's gong', and by Pliny himself, who found *cymbalum mundi* too tame and offered *propriae famae tympanum* 'the drum of his own renown' as a more accurate assessment (*Nat. praef.* 26):

> Indeed the grammarian Apion, the man Tiberius Caesar used to call the world's gong, though what he really seemed to be was the drum of his own renown, wrote that those to whom he dedicated some works received thereby the gift of immortality.

[19] There is no reason to call him Apion's pupil, as is often done.

[20] See Bernand 1960, 164–165 and Jacobson 1977 on the unlikelihood—on chronological and other grounds—of the graffito at the Colossus of Memnon (see n. 3) having been left there by our Apion. Holford-Strevens 2003, 69 and Bremmer 2005, 319–320 are inclined to accept its authenticity, but it is hard to see why Apion's boast, if it be such, would be used without comment by authors such as Pliny and Gellius (see n. 3), scornful as they are of Apion's self-promotion. Apion may of course have embraced a name that was originally an insult and made it his trademark, so to speak.

[21] For references to victory inscriptions see Jones 2005, 293 n. 69. For parallels between athletics and scholarship in the competition for 'manliness' see Connolly 2003 and van Nijf 2003. But what would count as 'victory' for a scholar?

> Apion quidem grammaticus—hic quem Tiberius Caesar cymbalum mundi[22] vocabat, cum propriae famae tympanum potius videri posset—immortalitate donari a se scripsit ad quos aliqua[23] componebat.

The layout of this sentence and its role in Pliny's preface (see n. 23) suggest that what prompted Pliny to insist on the self-serving nature of Apion's noise is Apion's claim to have immortalized his dedicatees; in Pliny's view, perhaps, time, not Apion, would tell. (We do not know the name of a single dedicatee.) As Josephus begins his rebuttal of Apion's writings on the antiquity of the Jews, he waxes eloquent on their author's attention-seeking antics (βωμολοχία) and asserts that throughout his life Apion had been an ὀχλαγωγός, a 'crowd-pleaser' or 'charlatan' (*Ap.* 2.3):

> Most of them contain buffoonery and—if it be necessary to speak the truth—much ignorance (ἀπαιδευσίαν), the sort of stuff that is cobbled together by a man both base in character and forever concerned with pleasing the crowd.

[22] The precise meaning of Tiberius' phrase deserves thought. The gong part is fine: the first thing that comes to mind is noise. But what about *mundi*? Pliny's antithesis does not help, since *mundi* cannot be a quasi-objective genitive of the sort that *famae* is, object, that is, of the verbal notion of 'producing sound' implicit in a reference to something like a drum. *Mundi* is better compared with genitives that convey the sphere in which someone, usually someone destructive, is effective: Catullus' *scabies famesque mundi* 'itch and hunger of the world' (47.2, referring to L. Calpurnius Piso Caesoninus) is the closest, but other comparanda are Pl. *Ps.* 364 *permities adulescentum* 'bane of young men', referring to a pimp, Ter. *Eun.* 79 *nostri fundi calamitas* 'calamity of our estate', referring to a *meretrix*, Cic. *Rab. Perd.* 2 *pestem et perniciem civitatis* 'plague and bane of the state', referring to a public enemy, and Horace's portrait of a parasite, *Ep.* 1.15.31: *pernicies et tempestas barathrumque macelli* 'bane, storm, and sinkhole of the marketplace'. If these are the appropriate parallels, the phrase will mean something like 'a gong making a din throughout the world'. But *mundi* might instead (or also) evoke Homeric phrases that combine noise or other sensory effects and the vault of heaven, ὁ οὐρανός: the gleam of fire (σέλας: *Il.* 8.509), the din of battle (σιδήρειος δ' ὀρυμαγδός: *Il.* 17.424–425), and the savory smell of sacrifice (κνίση: *Il.* 1.317) all reach the vault of heaven (εἰς οὐρανὸν ἵκῃ *vel sim.*), as does martial glory (κλέος: *Il.* 8.192). If the learned Tiberius has such phrases in mind as he thinks about our Homeric scholar, a better paraphrase of *cymbalum mundi* would be 'a gong whose din reaches the vault of heaven'.

[23] I argue elsewhere (Damon forthcoming) that the bland word *aliqua* 'some works' conceals the title required by the context here, where this sentence caps a lists of sixteen (objectionable) book titles and is immediately followed by Pliny's discussion of his own (sensible) title. The missing title will be that of a work in which Apion promised immortality to his addressees.

> τὰ πλεῖστα δὲ βωμολοχίαν ἔχει καὶ πολλήν, εἰ δεῖ τἀληθὲς εἰπεῖν, ἀπαιδευσίαν, ὡς ἂν ὑπ' ἀνθρώπου συγκείμενα καὶ φαύλου τὸν τρόπον καὶ παρὰ πάντα τὸν βίον ὀχλαγωγοῦ γεγονότος.[24]

Specifics, however, render Josephus blunt: seduction (*seductio*) is the man's aim, as his account of Jewish cannibalism was 'a willful falsehood for the seduction of those who were unwilling to sort out the truth' (*Ap.* 2.111 *mendacium spontaneum ad eorum seductionem qui noluerint discutere veritatem*).[25] The more dispassionate Gellius speaks of Apion's *studium ostentationis* 'passion for display' (5.14.3) and says that 'he advertises himself to a remarkable extent when imparting his doctrines' (*ibid.*, *est enim sane quam in praedicandis doctrinis sui venditator*; quoted more fully in section 5).

Advertising worked, at least posthumously. Josephus takes the trouble to refute at great length Apion's half-century-old writings about the Jews; he was all too conscious of their lasting appeal (*Ap.* 2.4):

> Most people, being fools, are hooked by such words … and they enjoy insults, hate praise.
>
> οἱ πολλοὶ τῶν ἀνθρώπων διὰ τὴν αὑτῶν ἄνοιαν ὑπὸ τῶν τοιούτων ἁλίσκονται λόγων … καὶ χαίρουσι μὲν ταῖς λοιδορίαις, ἄχθονται δὲ τοῖς ἐπαίνοις.

For Gellius, who credits Apion with possessing both knowledge (*scientia*) and a ready tongue (*facili atque alacri facundia*), and for Tatian, who calls him δοκιμώτατος 'a man of the highest repute' and yet singles him out as a man with outrageous views on the nature of the gods,[26] Apion was an eye-catching element of their cultural past. (In later sections we will several times see Apion, 'supremely' something, as dunghill cock atop a heap of whatever badness is under discussion; a first example already in n. 23.)

So eye-catching was Apion, in fact, that he attracted false attributions. When a Jewish apologist in the second century CE wanted to come up with a plausible author for a tongue-in-cheek encomium of adultery, Apion Pleistonices was his man.[27] Apion is also the unwitting

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[24] Cf. 2.136 ὀχλαγωγὸς … πονηρός …, καὶ τῷ βίῳ καὶ τῷ λόγῳ διεφθαρμένος 'a low charlatan, corrupt in both life and language'.

[25] Josephus' words are given in Latin here because the text of *Ap.* 2.52–113 survives only in a translation by Cassiodorus.

[26] Tatian, *ad Gr.* 28.28–30 τὰς περὶ τῶν κατ' Αἴγυπτον θεῶν δόξας Ἀπίωνος ἔχοντες 'those having Apion's opinions about the gods in Egypt'; the context requires sarcasm and the reference is presumably to Egypt's theriomorphic gods, as at Jos. *Ap.* 2.138–141.

[27] On the 'Apion' of the [Clementine] *Homilies* see Adler 1993 and Bremmer 2005.

front man for a polysemantic Homeric lexicon quite distinct from his own etymologizing lexicon (on which see section 4) but quoted with some regularity by Apollonius Sophistes and also surviving in four medieval manuscripts, surviving, that is, in better shape than Apion's own work, which is transmitted only via quotation.[28] For Eustathius, 'Apion' (with 'Herodorus') is the author of an important commentary on Homer, which he cites 68 times.[29]

From this quick survey of his general reputation, Apion emerges as both notable and notorious, an author to be used or refuted, with a penchant for advertising himself that elicited comment (Tiberius, Gellius) and indeed scorn (Pliny, Josephus).

4. *ὀχλαγωγός*

What were the doctrines he flogged with such vigor? As a grammarian in the tradition of Didymus and Theon, Apion contributed to the Homeric scholarship of his day, producing a *Glossary of Homeric Expressions* that Michael Haslam sees as 'a comprehensive Homeric lexicon' (1994, 27). His specialty seems to have been etymologies: ὁ δὲ Ἀπίων ἐτυμολογεῖ 'Apion, however, etymologizes' (or ἐτυμολογῶν 'etymologizing') is something of a refrain in Apollonius' lexicon (19 occurrences; the word is used with other subjects only 7 times). A favorite procedure—for Apion as for many ancient etymologists—was to derive a meaning from a word or words related, or apparently related, in form or sound.[30] As an example, consider the derivations proposed for σχέτλιος 'unflinching' or 'merciless' (Apion, fr. 132 (Neitzel)). According to Apion, it is either from σχέδην + τλῆναι 'gently to bear' or from τοῦ ἐπισχετικὸς ἐν τῷ δηλοῦσθαι ὑπάρχειν 'to be chary of exposure'. The procedure in the first case involves breaking down the word into

Like the historical Apion, he is a grammarian (4.6), a Jew-hater (5.2, 5.27, 5.29), and an authority on magic (5.3–8) and etymologies (6.10). Adler 1993, 132 n. 47 also mentions another work attributed to Apion: an apocryphal story about the biblical Joseph preserved in a fourth-century Coptic papyrus.

[28] The lexicographical work of [Apion] is published (as Apion's) in Ludwich 1917–1918; see Neitzel 1977, 301–326 and Haslam 1994, 35–43, esp. 35 n. 117: 'The ascription to Apion can be traced at least as far back as Eustathius (Apion fr. *23 Neitzel) and is doubtless antique if not original'.

[29] See Van der Valk 1963, 1–28.

[30] On ancient methods of etymologizing see Herbermann 1996, esp. 361–366. My focus here is on ancient responses to Apion's philology.

plausible—loosely speaking—component parts (σχέ + τλ) that can be explained separately, a procedure that leads to 'einige seiner phantasievollsten und absonderlichsten Erfindungen'.[31] The second etymology analyzes the word differently, seeing σχετ- as its most important element. Both analyses, according to Susanna Neitzel (1977, 194), are tailored to preexisting definitions of σχέτλιος—τάλας 'wretched' for the first, ἀγνώμων 'unfeeling' or χαλεπός 'difficult' for the second—and therefore show Apion trumping, so to speak, his predecessors by attaching his etymology to their meaning.[32] Another example illustrates how Apion pitched his explanations. τανύγλωσσοι (fr. 134), which modifies crows at *Od.* 5.66, ought to mean 'long-tongued' if one goes by the birds' appearance; 'Apion, however' (ὁ δὲ Ἀπίων …) says that it means 'with a protracted call' (τεταμένην ἔχουσαι τὴν φωνήν). 'So stützt er sich auf eine Beobachtung, die ein jeder machen kann' (Neitzel 1977, *ad loc.*). His explanation, that is, has a kind of immediacy that will make *ein jeder* snap his fingers and say, 'I should have thought of that!' In both passages here, and often elsewhere, Apion's argument depends on superficial connections between the lemma and its 'source', 'almost as if to show it is a game that anyone can play'.[33] This is of course true of other ancient etymologies as well, but Apion's work, so frequently quoted by Apollonius, can provoke him out of his customary reticence: κακῶς 'wrong' can be found among his comments on Apion, and 'Apion, however' is very common indeed (75 occurrences).[34] Apollonius seems to be reacting to the fact that 'Apion seinen Stolz darein setzte, eigene Wege zu gehen' (Neitzel 1977, 207).

Apion took his prestidigitatory scholarship on tour, offering to audiences throughout Greece a handy proof of Homer's authorship of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*—and *only* the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*—in the epic cycle (Sen. *Ep.* 88.40):

> Apion the grammarian, who under Gaius traveled throughout Greece and had Homer's name added to his by every city, used to maintain that Homer, when he had finished his two poems, the *Odyssey* and the *Iliad*,

[31] Neitzel 1977, 192. For other examples of fantastic or painfully wrong etymologies see Neitzel 1977, 192 nn. 29 and 31. For Apion's own obvious (but mistaken) context-based derivations see Neitzel 1977, 198–199.

[32] For another possible example of Apion 'trumping' a predecessor see n. 57.

[33] Haslam 1994, 28 n. 83. Tosi 1994, 178 views Apion as a purveyor of 'pseudo-etimologie'.

[34] For κακῶς see fr. 97; cf. also Porphyry's γελοιῶς 'absurd' at fr. 46. For Apollonius on Apion more generally see Neitzel 1977, 207–209.

> added a proem to his work covering the Trojan war. As an argument for this he asserted that Homer had purposely placed two letters in the opening line (*sc.* of the *Iliad*) containing the number of his books.
>
> Apion grammaticus, qui sub C. Caesare tota circulatus est Graecia et in nomen Homeri ab omnibus civitatibus adoptatus, aiebat Homerum, utraque materia consummata, et Odyssia et Iliade, principium adiecisse operi suo quo bellum Troianum conplexus est. Huius rei argumentum adferebat quod duas litteras in primo versu posuisset ex industria librorum suorum numerum continentes.

That is, the proem of the *Iliad* was added after Homer finished writing the 48 books of his two (and only two: *utraque*) poems, and it begins as it does—μῆνιν ἄειδε—because μή is the number 48. It is Seneca who retails this story. His reaction? 'Only someone who wants to know many things ought to know such things' (*Ep.* 88.41 *talia sciat oportet qui multa scire vult*). This looks like a roundabout way of saying 'drudge', and Seneca's point *is* the vanity of philology by comparison with philosophy; Kenneth Jones (2005, 287) nicely captures Apion's role in the argument: 'Seneca could think of no better illustration of scholarly frivolity than the grammarian and Homeric scholar'. But a glance back at the context Seneca provides for Apion's scholarly display here takes us miles away from the hunched and ink-flecked Alexandrian pedant conjured up by μόχθος: '… under Gaius traveled throughout Greece and had Homer's name added to his by every city'.[35] Apion's Greek audiences clearly liked their proofs both novel and simple.

In addition to his studies on Homer, Apion produced a treatise on the Latin language. Our sole trace of this work is a snippet in Athenaeus' *Deipnosophistae* (*Scholars at Dinner*) where Athenaeus mentions an Apionic etymology for χορωνόν 'garland' (Ath. 15.680d):

> Apion in *Concerning the Latin Language* says that a garland used to be called *choronon* from the fact that members of the chorus (*choreutai*) in theaters wore them.
>
> Ἀπίων ἐν τῷ περὶ τῆς Ῥωμαϊκῆς διαλέκτου φησὶν τὸν στέφανον πάλαι χορωνὸν καλούμενον ἀπὸ τοῦ τοὺς χορευτὰς ἐν τοῖς θεάτροις αὐτῷ χρῆσθαι.

[35] For the meaning of *in nomen Homeri adoptatus* (lit. 'adopted into Homer's name')—which probably refers to Apion's acquisition of the 'name' (also applied to other grammarians) ὁ Ὁμηρικός 'the Homeric'—cf. Apuleius on his own proudly borne 'Platonist' label: *Fl.* 15.26 *ut in nomen eius* (sc. *Platonis*) … *adoptarer*.

Why, you may well ask, do we find a Greek etymology for a Greek word in a treatise on the Latin language? Perhaps to show that, just as Rome was really a Greek city (as Dionysius of Halicarnassus argued a generation earlier), so Latin was really a Greek dialect, a long-lost cousin of Aeolic brought to Italy by Evander.[36] According to Michel Dubuisson, this theory had a brief floruit in the first centuries BCE and CE; its appeal to Romans brought up on Vergil is obvious, but it hardly survived Apion. In any case, even the specifics of this meager fragment give food for thought (though Athenaeus' scholarly diners do not indulge). The Latin word for garland, *corona*, is one of several that acquired an initial aspirate in the move from Greek to Latin. Now both Cicero and Quintilian know that there is no logic behind the pronunciation *chorona* when the Greek original is κορώνη, but they also admit that *chorona* is what people say (or used to say, in the case of a superior Quintilian).[37] So the fact that Apion provides an etymology for the word (*choronon*) closest to what the Romans said, uncommon though this form of the Greek word seems to have been (1 citation in LSJ for χορωνόν vs. 3 inches' worth for κορώνη), may also aim at pleasing a Roman audience.[38] For on the subject of *corona/chorona* Cicero himself advises against insistence on linguistic correctness: 'speech ought to gratify the pleasure of the ears' (*Orat.* 159 *voluptati … aurium morigerari debet oratio*).

The kind of editorializing about Apion that we saw in section 3 crops up again in connection with his philological work, and we catch a glimpse here of some of the features of his work that provoked it: material that was both novel and easily understood, and that catered, where possible, to what an audience wanted to believe.

5. *Cretan?*

The most frequently cited of Apion's titles after the *Glossary of Homeric Expressions* is a five-book work on Egypt, traditionally called, like many

[36] Dubuisson 1995 *passim.* He includes Apion in his list of writers who supported the theory 'de l'origine grecque du latin, précisément destinée à réfuter l'opinion, courante chez les grecs, de sa nature barbare' (1995, 60), and argues that this theory 'apparue dans un milieu bien déterminé, a pu servir à répondre à des besoins bien particuliers et à compléter d'autres constructions au but tout aussi apologetique' (*ibid.*).

[37] Quint. 1.5.20; cf. Cic. *Orat.* 160.

[38] For another tendentious cross-language etymology see section 6.

others, *Aegyptiaca* (*Egyptian affairs*).[39] The fragments themselves do not provide a coherent picture of the work, but many of them illustrate Gellius' characterization of the work as a purveyor of 'marvelous things' *mirifica*: 5.14.2 quoted in n. 39).[40]

For an example of a marvelous thing we can turn to Apion's claim that the ibis is immortal, as reported by Aelian (*NA* 10.29):[41]

> That the creature is very long-lived I have already said. Apion, however, says that the ibis is immortal, and cites as authorities the priests of Hermopolis who showed him one. This even to him seems to stand far distant from the truth, and to me it would appear to be utterly false.
>
> ὡς μὲν οὖν μακροβιώτατόν ἐστι τὸ ζῷον καὶ δὴ εἶπον. λέγει δὲ Ἀπίων καὶ ἐπάγεται τοὺς ἐν Ἑρμοῦ πόλει ἱερέας μάρτυρας δεικνύντας οἱ ἶβιν ἀθάνατον. τοῦτο μὲν οὖν καὶ ἐκείνῳ δοκεῖ τῆς ἀληθείας ἀφεστάναι πάμπολυ, καὶ ἐμοὶ δὲ πάντως ἂν καταφαίνοιτο ψευδές.

Aelian is willing to credit the ibis with a very long life—it is μακροβιώτατος, he says—but not with immortality: 'utterly false' (πάντως … ψευδές). Apion (note 'Apion, however') must have presented this 'marvelous thing' with some fanfare to warrant Aelian's 'even to him'; part of that fanfare was perhaps claiming to have seen the bird himself and pointing to his authority for the story: 'the priests of Hermopolis'. As we will see, eyewitness accounts and authority claims, often absurd ones, are Apionic trademarks.[42] Aelian's reaction to Apion's other stories of anomalous animals was similar (*NA* 11.40):

> Apion, however, if he is not telling tall tales (εἰ μὴ τερατεύεται), says that in some places deer have four kidneys.

[39] Jacoby (in part 3, section c, part 1) lists some 60 authors with works of this title. *Aegyptiaca* is generally accepted nowadays as the title of Apion's work on Egypt, but there is some variation in ancient references to the work: Gellius cites it under two titles, *Aegyptiaca* and *libri Aegyptiaci* (*Egyptian books*), and speaks of 'an account', *historia*, 'of practically all the marvelous things that are seen or heard in Egypt' (5.14.2 *omnium ferme, quae mirifica in Aegypto visuntur audiunturque*); Tatian mentions the five books of a single work (αὐτῷ 'in it' *ad Gr.* 39.14–15). Clement of Alexandria mentions the fourth book τῶν Αἰγυπτιακῶν ἱστοριῶν 'of his Egyptian accounts' (*Strom.* 1.101).

[40] *FGrHist* 616 (3c1: 122–145), *FHG* III: 506–516; Jacoby 1923– and Müller 1849 differ somewhat in their assignment of Apion's known fragments to the *Aegyptiaca*.

[41] Aelian does not say explicitly that he took this datum about the bird the ancients always associated with Egypt from the *Aegyptiaca*, but it seems likely.

[42] What distinguishes Apion's truth claims from those of historians, for whom they are also a generic marker, is that he simultaneously insists that what he is saying is true (e.g., 'the ibis is immortal, and I myself saw one') and offers a proof that practically deconstructs itself (e.g., 'the priests showed it to me'). They read, in fact, like spoofs of historiography, along one of the lines followed later by Lucian in *Vera historia*.

> λέγει δὲ Ἀπίων, εἰ μὴ τερατεύεται, καὶ[43] ἐλάφους νεφροὺς τέτταρας ἔχειν κατά τινας τόπους.

'Tall tales' also embraces the two-headed crane that, according to Apion, was seen during a time of prosperity for Egypt, and the four-headed bird that coincided with an exceptional Nile flood (*ibid.*). Less intrinsically marvelous but as Egyptocentric as these animal tales is Apion's explanation, reported by Gellius, of the habit of wearing rings on what we, like the Greeks and Romans, call the ring finger: dissection of the human body, which Apion claims as a *mos in Aegypto* 'an Egyptian custom', has shown, he says, that a very fine ligament runs from that finger—and that finger only—all the way to the heart, our body's 'governing power' (*principatus*). So we honor the finger with rings (Gellius 10.10.2). There is no such ligament, but—no anatomist he—Gellius refrains from comment.

Remarkable features of the natural and cultural world of Egypt combine forces with etymology in three further scraps plausibly assigned to the *Aegyptiaca*. One concerns the peculiar behavior of the island of Elephantine. This lozenge-shaped island in the Nile ought really to be called Ὀνυχίνη, says Apion, 'because like a fingernail (ὄνυξ) it grows back after having been taken away' (*Etym. Magn.* p. 329.13 ὅτι καθάπερ ὄνυξ ἀφαιρεθεὶς ἐπιβλαστάνει), presumably by the current, as Elephantine is located at the first cataract of the Nile. Egyptian mores come to the fore in Apion's etymology of ὕνις 'ploughshare': the Egyptian custom of letting hogs into the fields after a Nile flood led to the discovery of the ὕνις, which serves a purpose modeled on the 'nozzling and rooting' (so LSJ) of the hog, ὗς.[44] A patriotic rival to the Attica-centered story of Triptolemus? Even better is Apion's explanation of the Elysian fields. Apion locates this famous place, which Proteus, in the *Odyssey* line to which this scrap is attached as a scholion, predicts as Menelaus'

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[43] This καί, which is not rendered into English, connects Apion's four-kidneyed deer wtih Theophrastus' two-hearted partridges and Theopompus' two-livered hares. Note the numbers.

[44] On this fragment, preserved in the *Etymologicum Gudianum*, see Theodoridis 1989, 347. He gives the text as follows: ὕνις. ὁ σίδηρος τοῦ ἀρότρου. γέγονε δὲ ἀπὸ τοῦ δύνη. ὁ δὲ Ἀπίων φησὶν ἀπὸ τοῦ ὑὸς τοῦ χοίρου γέγονε τὸ ὕνις. πρῶτον γὰρ ὁ χοῖρος ἐπενόησε τῷ ῥύγχει διασχίζειν τὴν γῆν 'Ploughshare: the iron part of the plough. Comes from "sinking" (?). Apion however says *hunis* comes from *hus* ("hog"), the pig. For the pig in the first place designed to cleave the land with his snout'. The connection with Egypt comes out explicitly in a Plutarch passage (*Mor.* 670A) that Theodoridis argues is based on Apion's.

alternative to death, in Egypt. Why? Because 'Elysian' comes from ἰλὺς Νείλου 'mud of the Nile' (Eust. *ad Od.* 4.563):

> Apion, however, maintains that the plain between Canopus and Zephyrion is called this [*sc.* Elysium] from the mud of the Nile, which the river poured over the whole lower district in great quantities according to Herodotus.
>
> Ἀπίων δὲ κατασκευάζει τὴν περὶ Κάνωβον καὶ Ζεφύριον πεδιάδα οὕτω κληθῆναι παρὰ τὴν τοῦ Νείλου ἰλύν, ἣν πολλὴν καταφέρων ἐκεῖνος προσέχωσε τὴν κάτω χώραν κατὰ Ἡροδότου πᾶσαν.

Perhaps only an Egyptian would find that one persuasive.[45]

Many of Apion's Egypt-related fragments come from Pliny, who had encountered Apion in the flesh. Pliny lists Apion among his external (i.e., non-Roman) authorities for six books of the *Natural History* and reports some of his claims in the text of those books. At 37.75 Pliny mentions a 'recently written work' of Apion's, something *paulo ante scriptum*, but certainty about which, or how many, of Apion's works Pliny used in the *Natural History* is impossible, there being no secure title(s) in Pliny's lists or in his text.[46] Like Aelian, Pliny unabashedly culls his sources for *mirabilia*, but when it comes to Apion, like Aelian again Pliny keeps his distance.[47]

At 30.99, for example, we read of Egyptian reverence for scarab beetles, something for which, says Pliny, Apion offers a *curiosa interpretatio* 'a curious explanation': the beetle's dung-rolling labors are analogous to those of the sun moving across the sky. And this explanation is designed, says Pliny, *ad excusandos gentis suae ritus* 'to make his people's rites acceptable'. Equally Egyptian and even more troublesome to Pliny is Apion's discussion of a plant called *osiritis* 'the plant of Osiris' (30.18):

> A person may well ask what lies the Magi of old told, when the grammarian Apion, a man seen by me in my youth, reported[48] that the plant cynocephalia, which in Egypt is called the plant of Osiris, has magical

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[45] The word is generally derived from ἐνηλύσιος 'lightning-struck', later incorrectly divided into ἐν Ἠλυσίῳ 'in Elysium' (so Burkert 1960/61).

[46] The apparent title *de metallica medicina* 'on metal-based remedies' in the index for book 35 is a phantom: see Mayhoff 1906, *ad loc.*

[47] For Apionic material that falls into the category of remarkable but not incredible, however, Pliny provides no warning label: e.g., 36.79, where Apion concludes a long list of people who wrote about pyramids, and 37.75, where Pliny cites Apion on the existence of a gemstone, a '*smaragdus*', big enough to make a statue of Serapis 9 cubits, 13–14 feet, high; earlier in the chapter Pliny had mentioned other equally impressive *smaragdi.*

[48] *Prodiderit* 'reported', a word Pliny regularly uses to introduce citations from his

> properties and is (efficacious?)[49] against all poisons, but that if it is pulled up whole the one who pulled it up dies immediately …
>
> quaerat aliquis, quae sint mentiti veteres Magi, cum adulescentibus nobis visus Apion grammaticae artis prodiderit cynocephalian herbam, quae in Aegypto vocaretur osiritis, divinam et contra omnia veneficia, sed si tota erueretur, statim eum, qui eruisset, mori …

As evidence of the magical properties of this *herba divina* Apion seems to have said that he himself had used it to summon Homer from the dead in order to get the much-sought-after story of his birth from his own lips:

> … and further that he had summoned up the dead so he could ask Homer where he was born and who his parents were. But he didn't dare pass on what he said [Homer] had replied to him.
>
> … seque evocasse umbras ad percunctandum Homerum, quanam patria quibusque parentibus genitus esset, non tamen ausus profiteri, quid sibi respondisse diceret.[50]

Once again Apion has a starring role: in Pliny's tirade against the *vanitas* 'unreliability' of purveyors of magic at the beginning of Book 30 Apion is the last named (bad) example.[51] And he never did tell what he

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sources, suggests that he got the information about the marvelous plant from something Apion had written, not from the occasion when he saw him in person.

49 There is a textual problem in this passage: in the qualification of *osiritis* (in indirect statement) as *divinam et contra omnia veneficia* 'magical and against all poisons' the word on which the prepositional phrase depends is absent. Pliny uses expressions such as *contra X* 'against X', where X is a malady or mishap, hundreds of times in the *Natural History*, but so far as I have been able to discover (among the 786 examples of *contra* turned up by a PHI search), it is always dependent on an adjective (e.g., *efficax* 'efficacious', *utilis* 'useful') or a noun (e.g., *remedium* or *remedio* 'remedy') or a verb (e.g., *bibitur* 'is drunk', *inlinitur* 'is applied', *prosunt* 'are beneficial', *valet* 'is effective', *sumitur* 'is taken', *datur* 'is given'). For 'efficacious' compare the similar phrase at 21.162 on the plant *habrotonum* (southernwood): *efficacissimamque esse herbam contra omnia veneficia quibus coitus inhibeatur* 'and that it is a plant most efficacious against all potions by which intercourse is inhibited'.

50 The fact that Apion used *osiritis* to summon up the shade of Homer is not explicit in Pliny's report, but is required by the logic of his juxtaposition of Apion's statements and plausible given that *divinus* quite often has the sense 'connected with divination' (*TLL s.v.* 1623.76–1624.10).

51 Apion wrote a work entitled περὶ μάγου 'On the (or 'a') Mage', but its one surviving testimonium, which concerns a magical half-obol coin that always came back to its owner (quoted in the *Suda s.v.* Pases, the name of the coin's owner), does not have any obvious connection with the necromancy Pliny describes here. But magical expertise was part of Apion's posthumous reputation: see n. 27.

learned from Homer: it would have spoiled his welcome in all (but one) of those Greek cities who claimed Homer for themselves.[52]

It remains to consider briefly the two longest 'marvel' passages from Apion's 'Egyptian affairs'. Both are preserved in Gellius, both come from Apion's fifth book. Too long to quote in their entirety here, the passages offer versions of stories that have an existence of their own. What Gellius allows us to see is that Apion appropriated them to *his* life story. But what he does not allow us to see is what they have to do with Egypt. The first is the tale of Androcles (or Androclus in Gellius' Latin) and the lion,[53] which Apion personalized and set in Rome (5.14):

> Apion, who was called Plistonices, was a man rich in matters literary and with a large and varied knowledge of things Greek. His books are well known; in them is gathered an account of practically all the marvelous things that are seen or heard in Egypt. In the case of the things that he says he heard of or read about, he is perhaps too loquacious owing to his weakness and passion for display (*vitio studioque ostentationis loquacior*)—he advertises himself (*sui venditator*) to a remarkable extent when imparting his doctrines—but the following event, which he wrote down in the fifth book of his *Aegyptiaca*, he insists that he neither heard nor read but saw with his own eyes in Rome. 'In the Circus Maximus', he says, 'a gladiatorial hunt on a very generous scale was being given to the people. I happened to be in Rome at the time, and I was in the audience'. [The story occupies about 2 OCT pages, and includes a speech by Androcles. It concludes as follows:] … Such was the speech of Androcles, according to Apion. 'Afterwards', he says, 'we used to see Androcles with the lion on a thin leather leash making the rounds of the eateries of Rome; Androcles was given coins, and the lion was showered with flowers. Everybody everywhere kept saying, when they met them, "This is the lion who played host to a man, this the man who doctored a lion"'.

> Apion, qui Plistonices appellatus est, litteris homo multis praeditus rerumque Graecarum plurima atque varia scientia fuit. eius libri non incelebres feruntur, quibus omnium ferme, quae mirifica in Aegypto visuntur audiunturque, historia comprehenditur. sed in his, quae vel audisse vel legisse sese dicit, fortassean vitio studioque ostentationis sit loquacior—est enim sane quam in praedicandis doctrinis sui venditator—hoc autem, quod in libro Aegyptiacorum quinto scripsit, neque audisse neque legisse, sed ipsum sese in urbe Roma vidisse oculis suis confirmat. 'in circo maximo' inquit 'venationis amplissimae pugna populo dabatur. eius rei, Romae cum forte essem, spectator' inquit 'fui.'

[52] In the remaining three passages where Pliny cites Apion (31.21 on a pool in which nothing sinks, 32.19 on a fish capable of 'speech', 35.88 on lifelike portraits) we find more *mirabilia* but no Egypt; the last comes complete with disclaimer: *incredibile dictu*.

[53] See Thompson 1955–1958, vol. I B381 for other versions.

> … haec Apion dixisse Androclum tradit … 'postea' inquit 'videbamus Androclum et leonem loro tenui revinctum urbe tota circum tabernas ire, donari aere Androclum, floribus spargi leonem, omnes ubique obvios dicere: "hic est leo hospes hominis, hic est homo medicus leonis"'.

The second is the tale of the dolphin who loved a boy, *res ultra fidem tradita* 'a tale beyond belief' (Gell. 6.8 *titulus*; cf. 6.8.6 *ad hoc adicit rem* ⟨*non*⟩ *minus mirandam* 'to this he adds a point no less marvelous'), which in Apion's version, as in Pliny the Younger's (*Ep.* 9.33), is set on the bay of Naples, but which, again, has close parallels in other settings (Gell. 6.8.1–5):

> Dolphins are shown to be erotically inclined and amorous not only in the old histories but also in events of recent memory. For during the principate of Augustus in the sea off Puteoli (as Apion has written) and centuries earlier at Naupactus (as Theophrastus reported) some dolphins were found to be in a passion of love. I transcribe the words of the learned Apion, from the fifth book of his *Aegyptiaca*, in which he reports the behavior of a dolphin in love and the boy who returned his affection, their games, rides, and races. He says he himself saw all these things, as did many others … [The passage continues with Apion's Greek, which begins αὐτὸς δ' αὖ εἶδον 'indeed I myself saw [the dolphin].']

> delphinos venerios esse et amasios non modo historiae veteres, sed recentes quoque memoriae declarant. nam et sub Caesaris ⟨Augusti imperio⟩ in Puteolano mari, ut Apion scriptum reliquit, et aliquot saeculis ante apud Naupactum, ut Theophrastus tradidit, amore flagrantissimi delphinorum cogniti compertique sunt. … verba scripsi Ἀπίωνος, eruditi viri, ex Aegyptiacorum libro quinto, quibus delphini amantis et pueri non abhorrentis consuetudines, lusus, gestationes, aurigationes refert eaque omnia sese ipsum multosque alios vidisse dicit …

It is hard to see what either of these tales is doing in Apion's *Egyptian affairs*, unless Karl Lehrs' suggestion (1837, 17) for the latter passage—that an Egyptian dolphin story served as the peg on which Apion hung his Campanian tale—is true *mutatis mutandis* for both; a similar dolphin story set in Egypt is in fact known from Aelian (*NA* 6.15). If so, these tales illustrate Apion's penchant for self-advertisement (mentioned by Gellius in connection with the first of the stories: 5.14.3 *studio … ostentationis*), since he claimed to have witnessed both events (5.14.4, 6.8.4–5), and possibly also his truth claims, if he adduced what he had seen in Italy in support of the veracity of what he reported about Egypt.

We saw earlier that both Aelian and Pliny tried to inoculate their readers against Apion's self-verified and self-serving material. And we see here similar personal testimonials in Gellius' Apion: 5.14.4 *sese in*

urbe Roma vidisse suis oculis confirmat 'he insists that he saw [it] with his own eyes in the city of Rome', 6.8.4 αὐτὸς δ' αὖ εἶδον 'indeed I myself saw [the dolphin]'. Leofranc Holford-Strevens captures Gellius' tone in these passages nicely with his phrase (2003, 80 n. 57) 'the *soi-disant* eyewitness'. Josephus, too, comments on Apion's tactic of vouching for his own statements (*Ap.* 2.136):

> He had to be a witness on his own behalf (μάρτυρος ἑαυτοῦ), for to the rest of the world he seemed a low charlatan, as corrupt in his life as in his language.
>
> ἔδει γὰρ αὐτῷ μάρτυρος ἑαυτοῦ. τοῖς μὲν γὰρ ἄλλοις ἅπασιν ὀχλαγωγὸς ἐδόκει πονηρὸς εἶναι, καὶ τῷ βίῳ καὶ τῷ λόγῳ διεφθαρμένος.[54]

Similarly on Apion's assertion that Jews swear an oath to benefit no non-Jew, particularly no Greek: 'It seems that Apion alone has heard this oath' (2.121 τὸν ὅρκον ... μόνος Ἀπίων, ὡς ἔοικεν, ἤκουσεν). But Apion's external 'authorities' carry no more conviction than does his personal authority when it comes to the truth-value of a tale.[55] From an incredulous Aelian we learned that Apion based his story about a deathless ibis on the evidence of priests in Hermopolis (quoted above), and from a sarcastic Josephus that Apion based his claim that Moses was an Egyptian, indeed a resident of Heliopolis, on a conversation he had with some elderly Egyptians (*Ap.* 2.13):

> Clearly, being a young man himself, he took the word of those who were old enough to have known and interacted with [Moses]!
>
> δῆλον ὅτι νεώτερος μὲν ὢν αὐτός, ἐκείνοις δὲ πιστεύσας τοῖς διὰ τὴν ἡλικίαν ἐπισταμένοις αὐτὸν καὶ συγγενομένοις.[56]

One last example: Apion claimed familiarity with the game played in Penelope's yard by her suitors. Whence? 'From one Kteson, a resident of Ithaca' (Ath. 16e παρὰ τοῦ Ἰθακησίου Κτήσωνος).[57]

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[54] For Josephus' point about Apion's corrupt life see n. 65.

[55] One may compare Josephus' reaction to the spurious precision in Apion's dating of exodus (*Ap.* 2.15–17, quoted below).

[56] Apion's claim is in the quoted passage that provokes Josephus' sarcasm here (*Ap.* 2.10): 'Μωσῆς, ὡς ἤκουσα παρὰ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων τῶν Αἰγυπτίων, ἦν Ἡλιοπολίτης' '"Moses, as I heard from the older Egyptians, was a Heliopolitan"'. And Josephus follows up his outburst with a more sober restatement (2.14): οὕτως ἀποφαίνεται ῥᾳδίως, πιστεύων ἀκοῇ πρεσβυτέρων, ὡς δῆλός ἐστι καταψευσάμενος 'he reveals it [*sc.* Moses's origin] so recklessly, relying on the hearsay of older men, that his falsification is manifest'. The emphasis on Apion's unreliable sources is remarkable.

[57] The entire passage runs 1.16e–17b, and Athenaeus, presumably basing his account on Apion's, gives the rules in some detail: 108 pieces arranged on two sides of a game board, a 'Penelope' piece in the middle at which the players take aim one by one,

I like to think that these provokingly false truthfulness claims are the origin of the puzzling phrase 'but according to Heliconius, a Cretan' in the *Suda* entry. That is, that Heliconius' information is an allusion not to the author's place of origin, but to the nature of his writings.[58] Cretans are always liars, says an ancient conundrum.

So far as the fragmentary evidence permits us to see, Apion's *mirifica* are no more marvelous than those in the many other collections of *paradoxa* available in the first and second centuries CE. But in the authors who relay Apion's 'marvelous things' there are fairly consistent signs of irritation at the way he presents them: at his self-serving Egyptian puffery, at his self-advertising truth claims, at his self-deconstructing authorities.

6. ὁ γραμματικὸς ὁ ἀκριβής?

But there was more to the *Aegyptiaca* than marvels. Perhaps trivially, there are a number of fragments, usually pertaining to Egyptian place names, that have nothing marvelous about them. But the exiguous nature of these quotations sheds little light on Apion's original.[59] More substantial is the material quoted from the third and fourth books of the *Aegyptiaca*, most of which comes from Josephus' rebuttal (*Ap.* 2.2 ἀντίρρησις 'rebuttal', 2.147 ἀπολογία 'defense speech').[60] Here again Apion caps a list: 'Josephus gives him some prominence by making him the last object of direct refutation at the start of a new book'.[61]

Josephus describes what he is responding to as 'an outright indictment against us written as if for a court of law' (*Ap.* 2.4 κατηγορίαν ἡμῶν ἄντικρυς ὡς ἐν δίκῃ γεγραφότα).[62] We can discern three prongs in

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the first person to hit the Penelope marker without touching any of the others wins. Here we can perhaps see Apion vying with Herodotus, who had asked Egyptian priests whether the Greek story of what happened at Troy had anything to it, and reports that they gave him in reply some information they claimed to have had 'from Menelaus himself' (2.118.1 παρ' αὐτοῦ Μενέλεω); Apion eliminates the middlemen.

[58] Such was suggested long ago by von Gutschmid (1889–1894, vol. 4: 357).

[59] E.g., *FGrHist* 616 F 8, 9, 20.

[60] This comes in Book 2 of a work that goes by the misleading modern title *contra Apionem* (*Against Apion*), in Book 1 of which, as well as in the second half of Book 2, Apion is entirely absent. Goodman 1999, 45 suggests *On the antiquity of the Jews* as its original title.

[61] Barclay 1998, 200.

[62] Cf. *Ap.* 2.33 ἃ κατηγόρηκεν 'the charges laid', 2.132 κατήγορος … Ἀπίων 'Apion

Apion's attack on the Jews. The first prong is the oft-rehearsed question about the antiquity of a people, here the Jews. Apion dated the exodus from Egypt very late, in fact he synchronized it with the foundation of Carthage in the first year of the seventh Olympiad, or 752 BCE. Arnaldo Momigliano suggests that the synchronism also implied a parallel post-eventum prediction of enmity between the Jews and Rome comparable to that between the Carthaginians and Rome.[63] The second prong is an attack on the Jewish population of Alexandria based on events from the history of their presence in that city. And the final prong is a generalized attack citing both practices attributed to the Jews—worshipping an ass's head in the Temple, for example, or human sacrifice, even cannibalism—and their alleged lowly status in the world: never hegemonic, often afflicted, and never having produced great men on the order of Socrates or Zeno or Cleanthes or, it seems, Apion himself.[64] It is hard to find much common ground here with the *mirifica* mentioned earlier, unless it is in the capacity of Apion's words to provoke. Aelian, as we saw above, only just refrains from calling Apion a liar. Josephus doesn't refrain at all; indeed he calls him that and worse a dozen times. And one of the arguments underlying his varied palette of insult is Apion's failure to meet the standards of scholarship.[65]

John Dillery has recently shown that Josephus assumes his readers knew Apion's reputation as a scholar, and that he derives thereby ammunition against Apion.[66] If Apion will not identify Homer's birthplace, asks Josephus, how does he dare pronounce confidently on that

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the prosecutor', 2.137 κατηγορίᾳ 'in a prosecution speech', 2.148 κατηγορίαν … ἀθρόαν 'a unified indictment'.

[63] Momigliano 1977.

[64] Jos. *Ap.* 2.135: εἶτα τὸ θαυμασιώτατον τοῖς εἰρημένοις αὐτὸς ἑαυτὸν προστίθησι καὶ μακαρίζει τὴν Ἀλεξάνδρειαν, ὅτι τοιοῦτον ἔχει πολίτην 'Then—a most amazing thing—he adds himself to the men he has mentioned [viz. Socrates, Zeno, and Cleanthes] and congratulates Alexandria on possessing such a citizen'.

[65] Apion's personal history exposes him to attack on a different front, as well: Egyptian by birth, Alexandrian by adoption, he is charged with being both pro-Egyptian and anti-. Pro- in his praise for Egyptian marvels or discoveries and in his defense of the country's customs and beliefs (Plin. *Nat.* 30.99, Jos. *Ap.* 2.138–142, Tatian *ad Gr.* 28.28–30), anti- in his shedding of Egyptian behaviors for Greek ones (Jos. *Ap.* 2.34, 2.143) and for ascribing an Egyptian origin to a people he wished to denigrate (Jos. *Ap.* 2.29–30). For more on both critiques see Barclay 1998 and Jones 2005.

[66] Dillery 2003. At the beginning of the *contra Apionem* the historian Josephus shows himself to be conversant with questions that would concern a grammarian: were letters in use in the age of the Trojan war (1.11)? Are inconsistencies in the Homeric epics due to oral composition (1.12)?

of Moses, who lived so many centuries earlier (2.14)? We have already seen Josephus' sarcastic response to Apion's evidence for Moses' native place. Another example: Apion, 'that precise scholar' (2.15 ὁ γραμματικὸς ὁ ἀκριβής), sets the date of the exodus 'precisely' (2.17 ἀκριβῶς) in the year of the foundation of Carthage, 'thinking [Carthage] the most striking evidence for his truthfulness' (τεκμήριον οἰόμενος αὑτῷ γενέσθαι τῆς ἀληθείας ἐναργέστατον). More truth-claims from Apion eliciting more rebuttal from Josephus, who himself adduces apparently respectable primary sources—Phoenician chronicles—that put the foundation of Carthage centuries after the exodus (2.18–19). We do not need to know how reliable these sources in fact were to see that here too Josephus challenges Apion on the grounds of scholarly merit. A final example, again connecting grammarian and historian: Apion's tendentious etymological explanation of the term sabbath—sabbath from 'sabbo', Egyptian for 'swellings in the groin' (an affliction that, according to Apion, caused the Jews to rest after reaching Judaea on the seventh day of their journey from Egypt)—is refuted three times over.[67] By the absurdity of the scenario: 110,000 diseased emigrants journeying across the desert (2.22–24). By the inconsistency between this six-day journey and Apion's account of a forty-day delay while Moses was on Mt. Sinai (2.25). And by the proper Hebrew etymology of the word (2.26–27).[68] Josephus does not know whether to ascribe Apion's etymology to φλυαρία 'nonsense' or ἀναίδεια 'shamelessness' or ἀμαθία 'ignorance', but on none of these explanations is it work worthy of Apion's professional status as grammarian, which, as Barclay (1998, 202) and Dillery (2003, 384) point out, Josephus mentions repeatedly in this discussion (see n. 7).[69] He will mention it once more in the context of his refutation of Apion's 'indictment' of the Jews of Alexandria

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[67] Barclay 1998, 210: 'This distinctive Jewish term was, he could claim, a further mark of their Egyptian roots'. Cf. Apion's use of a Greek etymology to show the Greek origins of Latin (section 4).

[68] We get another glimpse of Apion the etymologist in Josephus' report that Apion 'makes fun of' (σκώπτει) the names of the Jewish generals Onias and Dositheus (2.49). For the first, at least, one possibility is clear: 'doubtless deriving Onias from Greek ὄνος' (Thackeray 1926, *ad loc.*).

[69] Josephus' language is rather diffuse here; the particular passages alluded to are *Ap.* 2.22 (οὐκ ἂν οὖν τις ἢ καταγελάσειε τῆς φλυαρίας ἢ τοὐναντίον μισήσειε τὴν ἐν τῷ τοιαῦτα γράφειν ἀναιδείαν 'Would one not either laugh at the nonsense or on the other hand stand indignant at the shamelessness shown in writing such stuff?') and 2.26 (ἡ δὲ περὶ τὴν ὀνομασίαν τοῦ σαββάτου γραμματικὴ μετάθεσις ἀναίδειαν ἔχει πολλὴν ἢ δεινὴν ἀμαθίαν 'On the subject of the sabbath the grammarian's alteration manifests much shamelessness or terrible ignorance'). Dillery 2003, 384 draws a contrast between

(2.109, quoted below). Josephus' overall assessment of Apion's account, in the third book of the *Aegyptiaca*, of Moses and the exodus, is that its aims were novelty and one-upmanship (2.28):

> Such are the inventions about Moses and the Jews' exodus from Egypt that the Egyptian Apion produced (ἐκαινοποίησεν), surpassing the rest in his contrivances.
>
> τοιαῦτα μέν τινα περὶ Μωσέως καὶ τῆς ἐξ Αἰγύπτου γενομένης τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις ἀπαλλαγῆς ὁ Αἰγύπτιος Ἀπίων ἐκαινοποίησεν παρὰ τοὺς ἄλλους ἐπινοήσας.

When Josephus turns to Apion's attack on the Jews of Alexandria in the fourth book of the *Aegyptiaca*, the focus of his critique is historiographical method (2.109):

> For did the grammarian not promise that he was bringing forth true historical knowledge?
>
> historiae enim veram notitiam se proferre grammaticus non promisit?

Josephus ticks off the various ways in which Apion failed to do due diligence as an historian. He failed to consult the relevant sources, including historians (2.43 Hecataeus, 2.61 Julius Caesar, 2.84 Polybius, Strabo, Nicolaus, Timagenes, Castor, Apollodorus, 2.136 Josephus himself), Macedonian and Roman public records (2.37, 2.61–62, esp. 2.62 *has litteras Apionem oportebat inspicere* 'Apion ought to have looked at this letter'), and well-known Jewish practices (2.55, 2.109, 2.118–120). He also used poor sources (2.79), contradicted himself (2.68, 2.117), twisted the evidence (2.51, 2.56, 2.60, 2.63), made things up (2.37, 2.88–90, 2.110–111, 2.121–124), and was ignorant of customary usage (2.38–42), geography (2.115–116), and world history (2.125–132). His aim was not *vera notitia* 'true knowledge' at all, but *seductio* 'seduction' (2.111, quoted in section 3).

Novelty, one-upmanship, shamelessness, ignorance, audience seduction—so far the critique of Apion's work is familiar: it is scholarship that is either self-serving or incompetent, or both. But it can also be dangerous. Apion openly catered to the anti-Jewish prejudices of the Greeks of Alexandria. Indeed according to Josephus he offered his attack on the Jews 'as a kind of return' (ὥσπερ τινὰ μισθόν) to the Alexandrians for the favor of citizenship (*Ap.* 2.32):

Josephus on Apion and Josephus on Hecataeus, a scholar with a similar output but never labeled 'grammarian'.

> Knowing their hatred for the Jews living with them in Alexandria, he proposes to slander those Jews, but includes with them all the others.
>
> τὴν ἀπέχθειαν αὐτῶν ἐπιστάμενος τὴν πρὸς τοὺς συνοικοῦντας αὐτοῖς ἐπὶ τῆς Ἀλεξανδρείας Ἰουδαίους προτέθειται μὲν ἐκείνοις λοιδορεῖσθαι, συμπεριλαμβάνει δὲ καὶ τοὺς ἄλλους ἅπαντας.

Even worse, he catered to the antipathy to the Jews roused in Gaius after the riots in the summer of 38 CE: asserting that the Jews neglected to pay the honors due to Caesar (see Jos. *AJ* 18.257, quoted in section 2)—specifically, to erect statues of him and to use his name in oaths (*AJ* 18.258)—he made it easier for the emperor to feel insulted by those he suspected and to set about punishing them.[70] (Gaius was assassinated before he could carry out his plans.)[71] Josephus tells us that Apion's charge ignored the Jews' long-standing exemption from participation in imperial cult (*Ap.* 2.73–78). But the fact that Apion's case was a bad one did not prevent it from finding a willing audience in Gaius. For the insulting reception accorded Philo's rival legation ('the affair was a farce'; see n. 17) suggests that in attack mode Apion was at least as successful as he was on the lecture circuit.

The Jewish material in the fourth book of the *Aegyptiaca* may have functioned like an indictment, but it is criticized as poor historiography. Likewise, Apion's discussion of the date of the Jewish exodus is pilloried as the work of a grammarian who has fallen short of his profession's standards of accuracy and proof. In both critiques Josephus is engaging in a little crowd-pleasing of his own. For he has observed, he says, that it gives people great pleasure 'when one who has started saying outrageous things (βλασφημεῖν) about someone else is brought to book for the vices (κακῶν) that pertain to him' (*Ap.* 2.5 ὅταν τις ἀρξάμενος βλασφημεῖν ἕτερον αὐτὸς ἐλέγχηται περὶ τῶν αὐτῷ προσόντων κακῶν).

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[70] For Gaius' hostility to Jews see, e.g., Ph. *Leg.* 115 Ἰουδαίους ὑπεβλέπετο 'he regarded the Jews with suspicion', 133 μῖσος ἄλεκτον ἔχοντα πρὸς Ἰουδαίους 'harboring an unspeakable hatred for the Jews', 180 ἐχθρὸς ἄσπονδος 'a relentless enemy', 201, 373. At *Leg.* 166–171 and *Flacc.* 21–24, 92–103 Philo attributes to two other men, an imperial freedman and a provincial governor, the strategy of winning Gaius' favor by showing hostility to the Jews.

[71] For the chronology see Smallwood 1970, *ad* Ph. *Leg.* 115.

7. *Conclusion:* cor asini … impudentia canis *'mind of an ass … impudence of a dog'*[72]

In a memorable passage of scholarly acrimony from a more recent era, A.E. Housman used the regrettable example of Apionic scholarship as a stick with which to beat Lucilius' editor Friedrich Marx (1972, 683):

> Apion, unless he was the liar Josephus thought him, called up the spirit of Homer from the dead, and ascertained from his own melodious lips the true city and parentage of that widely born and many-fathered man. But the information thus elicited he kept secret in the deep of his heart, and the world was none the wiser. Mr Marx, like Apion, is an adept in the black art, but he is not, like Apion, a dog in the manger. He is brimful of knowledge which he can only have acquired by necromancy, and he puts it all at our disposal.

Necromancy is perhaps the most doubtful of Apion's many dubious sources of information for his literary and historical doctrines. Modern scholars caution us against holding Apion's scholarship to anachronistic standards, but no modern tut-tutting comes close to the criticisms Apion attracted in antiquity.[73] If Rudolf Pfeiffer's description (quoted in the epigraph) of the ancient scholars who kept alive the flame of philology bears any resemblance to the truth about Apion's predecessors, the reactions that Apion provoked make sense. Instead of intellectual power, a taste for the fantastic. Instead of absolute honesty, a disquieting blend of opportunism and one-upmanship. Patience in the pursuit of truth? Rather, shoddy work unbefitting a scholar. The ancient critiques of Apion's work—it was ignorant (Josephus: ἀπαιδευσία, ἀμαθία), tedious (*Suda*: Μόχθος), insubstantial (Pliny: *vanitas,* Josephus: φλυαρία, Africanus: περιεργότατος), unbelievable (Pliny: *curiosa, incredibile dictu*, Gellius: *ultra fidem*, Aelian: τερατεύεται), shameless (Josephus: ἀναίδεια), attention-seeking (Tiberius: *cymbalum mundi,* Josephus: βωμολοχία, ἐκαινοποίησεν, Gellius: *studio … ostentationis loquacior*), outrageous (Josephus: βλασφημεῖν), amazing (Josephus: θαυμασιώτατον), absurd (Porphyry: γελοιῶς), self-serving (Pliny: *propriae famae tympanum,*

[72] Jos. *Ap.* 2.85 *haec igitur Apion debuit respicere, nisi cor asini ipse potius habuisset et impudentiam canis, qui apud ipsos assolet coli* 'these things Apion was obliged to consider, unless he had the mind of an ass and the impudence of a dog, an animal habitually worshiped in his country'. For *cor* (lit. 'heart') as the 'seat of intellection' or 'mind' see *TLL s.v.* III.B. and D.

[73] Cautions: e.g., Neitzel 1977, 193. Modern tut-tutting: e.g., Henrichs and Müller 1976, 27 on Apion as largely responsible for 'die Auflösung der philologischen Zunft'.

Josephus: ὀχλαγωγός, *seductio*, Gellius: *sui venditator*), and wrong (Apollonius: κακῶς, Josephus: καταψευσάμενος, *mendacium*, Aelian: ψευδές, Heliconius: Cretan?)—are all points on the spectrum described by Josephus when he suggested that Apion possessed the mind of an ass and the impudence of a dog. Those who came after him were wary of his information, and he is not now credited with any significant influence on the study of Homer or Egypt. Indeed Albert Henrichs and Wolfgang Müller (1976, 27) commiserate with the lexicographer Apollonius, 'der sich in seinem Lexicon dutzendfach mit den phantasievollen Homeretymologien des Gräkoägypters Apion auseinandersetzen musste', while Plutarch, when he came to write on the Egyptian cults of Isis and Osiris, seems to have looked elsewhere for his information.[74] In the end, Apion's name, so assiduously puffed, had more staying power (via pseudepigrapha and anecdote) than his work.

During his own lifetime, however, Apion achieved a remarkable degree of success: teacher in Rome, head of the Library in Alexandria, fêted throughout Greece as 'the Homeric', lead ambassador to the emperor Gaius, and on the spot for remarkable occurrences in Italy (if one believes his lion and dolphin stories). He owed this success to nothing other than his grammarian's training, at least so far as our sources tell us. His most vocal critics—Seneca, Pliny, Josephus—were well aware of his worldly status: Seneca knows about the Greek lecture tour, Pliny had seen the man in action, and Josephus knows about the embassy. Their trenchant criticisms of the quality of his scholarship may reflect chagrin at the flimsy foundation of so sparkling an edifice.

Ancient scholarship was feverishly competitive, particularly under rulers with recondite interests. Tiberius' predilection for difficult authors like Euphorion, Rhianus, and Parthenius, whose busts he added to the public libraries in Rome (Suet. *Tib.* 70.2), encouraged a little boom in the creation of learned commentaries, and with it the rather hectic atmosphere of one-upmanship in which Apion flourished. Claudius, another emperor with a taste for scholarship, caused an addi-

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[74] Gwyn Griffiths 1970, 88–94 notes that Plutarch does not seem to have taken from Apion any information about Isis and Osiris except, perhaps, a story with anti-Semitic overtones that Plutarch discards as unworthy of belief (*Mor.* 363C11–14). Aelian's use of Apion on Egypt is explored by Wellmann 1896, whose conclusions about the importance and learning of Apion's work on Egypt go too far. Van der Horst 2002, 221 waxes sarcastic on Apion's influence: 'To be the inventor of the libel of Jewish cannibalism is a form of originality that has rightly won Apion the bad reputation he has enjoyed till the present day'.

tion to be built onto the Library at Alexandria and arranged for yearly readings there of two of his historical works, written in Greek (Suet. *Claud.* 42.2). Apion had risen to the head of the scholars working at this institution in about 20 CE. Susanna Neitzel asks (1977, 209): 'Soll man annehmen, dass ein blosser Schwätzer und Scharlatan zum Vorsteher einer der traditionsreichsten und angesehensten philologischen Schulen des Antike berufen wurde?' We lack the necessary acquaintance with Apion's work to make a firm judgement about his qualifications for the job, but for those whose opinion about Apion has survived until the present the 'call' would have seemed, I think, a bad one.[75]

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[75] I have been pursuing Apion for more than a decade now and have incurred many debts of gratitude to those who have guided my inquiries. Some lines of investigation have not yet come to fruition, but it is time, indeed past time, to express my thanks. Audiences at Smith College, the University of Colorado, the University of Pennsylvania, and Princeton University have helped me see what questions to ask about Apion. A particularly productive occasion was a UVa conference on Apion in honor of Edward Courtney on the occasion of his retirement; my thanks go to my fellow speakers, John Dillery and James Rives, and to the lively audience in the Rotunda, which helped us all see Apion in the round. Individuals who have read drafts or answered questions are warmly thanked here, without, of course, incurring any responsibility for my claims: Gideon Bohak, Edward Courtney, Sara Myers, Sarolta Takács, R.J. Tarrant. Thanks come too late for my Amherst colleague Peter Marshall, who passed away in 2001. Let me conclude this list of scholars who have been willing to help me see how Apion may be significant with thanks to the editors of this volume, Ralph Rosen and Ineke Sluiter, whose percipient comments have strengthened this chapter and who have given Apion and his opprobrious epithets a suitable setting in a collection of chapters on κακία.

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CHAPTER FOURTEEN

FROM VICE TO VIRTUE: THE DENIGRATION AND REHABILITATION OF *SUPERBIA* IN ANCIENT ROME

Yelena Baraz

1. *Introduction*

Pride is an ambiguous quality.[1] We praise those who take pride in themselves and their work, while criticizing the proud if they seem arrogant and egotistical.[2] In his triadic analysis of moral virtue as the mean between two vices in book four of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle carves out a positive role for pride—*megalopsukhia*, proper pride,[3] is elevated, in

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[2] The most recent philosophical analysis of pride known to me is Kristjánsson's spirited defense of 'pridefulness' as a necessary attendant of self-respect, which in turn is generally agreed by moral philosophers to be a condition of a good life.

[3] *Megalopsukhia* is discussed in *EN* 1123a34–1125a35. Most recent treatments and translations have moved away from equating Aristotle's term with an English concept, opting instead for a more literal translation, greatness of soul (e.g. Broadie and Rowe 2002, Richardson Lear 2004, Crisp 2006). Magnanimity, which follows the Latin calque of the Greek, *magnanimitas*, used by, e.g., Hardie 1978 and Irwin 1985, seems to have been a placeholder rather than a translation, as magnanimity in modern English usage is quite different from what Aristotle describes (on the development from Aristotelian *megalopsukhia* to Latin *magnitudo animi* see Knoche 1935). Pride was used to render *megalopsukhia* by David Ross in the Oxford translation of Aristotle, originally published in 1925. Pride with its many connotations may seem misleading as an equivalent for *megalopsukhia* in analyzing Aristotle: cf. Richardson Lear 2004, 168 n. 46, who supports 'dignity' as a more appropriate rendering, and Kristjánsson 2002, 100–102, who analyzes Aristotle's *megalopsukhia* as consisting of greatness, self-knowledge and a general concern with honor which he terms 'pridefulness' and distinguishes from 'simple pride', an 'episodic emotion of self-satisfaction' (2002, 105). However, imperfect conceptual fits are often necessary in order to allow cross-cultural comparisons. The following definition of pride in the *OED* demonstrates a sufficient degree of overlap with Aristotle's description to allow us to think of *megalopsukhia* as a quality closely

contrast with *mikropsukhia* and *khaunotês*, the lack and excess respectively. Where an individual belongs within this spectrum of pride, arrogance, and undue humility is determined by his relationship to *megala* 'great things'. It is not, however, one's inherent greatness, but rather the relationship between a man's own estimation of his claim to greatness and an objective evaluation of his worth that plays the decisive role.[4] Pride, positively conceived, then, exemplifies the proper alignment between internal perception and externally assigned worth and, in practical terms, results in correct expectation of honor on the part of the proud man.[5] A claim to greater things than can be externally validated results in arrogance and vanity;[6] an underestimation of one's deserts is, to Aristotle, even more damning: it leads to the vice of lack, a failure of spirit, *mikropsukhia*. While Aristotle's analysis is constructed to serve his larger philosophical goals, the ambivalent moral status of pride-like qualities, inherent in his triadic division,[7] can be extended more broadly to their status within the Greek conceptual framework, given the existence of a number of words that, depending on the context, can designate one's sense of self-worth as both positive and negative, e.g. *phronêma*, *phronêsis*, *onkos*, and *megalophrosunê*.[8]

My concern in this chapter is based on the fact that, in contrast to Aristotle's analysis, the Romans appear to have no word that expresses a positive conception of pride.[9] Among the group of words relating

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related to English pride: 'A consciousness or feeling of what is befitting or due to oneself or one's position, which prevents a person from doing what he considers to be beneath him or unworthy of him; esp. as a good quality, legitimate, 'honest', or 'proper pride', self-respect; also as a mistaken or misapplied feeling, 'false pride'' (*OED s.v.* B I 3a).

[4] *EN* 1123b1–2: δοκεῖ δὴ μεγαλόψυχος εἶναι ὁ μεγάλων αὑτὸν ἀξιῶν ἄξιος ὤν· Note the emphasis on the equivalence of self-evaluation and externally verifiable reality, emphasized by using ἀξιῶν for the former and ἄξιος for the latter, and placing them side by side.

[5] The issues surrounding the interpretation of Aristotle's description of *megalopsukhos* are helpfully summarized by Crisp 2006, 174–177.

[6] *Khaunotês*, the term that Aristotle uses, is metaphorical and rare: the image is vanity as porousness, one's inability to realize how much of one's content is empty air. This quality can in turn lead to its possessor's becoming a *huperoptês* and a *hubristês* (on *hubris* see Fisher 1992 and the response by Cairns 1996).

[7] Such a division proves impossible for justice, which has only one attendant negative quality, injustice. On this issue see Young 2006 with further bibliography.

[8] LSJ *s.vv.*

[9] On the reasons for negative views of pride in modern discourse see Kristjánsson 2002, 111–135, who attempts to refute all the objections to the quality as incompatible with being a moral and virtuous person. See esp. 2002, 130–131 on the influence of Christian ideas.

to pride in Latin (*adrogantia*, *insolentia*, *fastus*, *superbia*), none seems to admit of a positive interpretation of pride as a virtue, but all designate instead the excess of pride. That curious semantic situation obtains until Horace and, following him, other Augustan poets appropriate *superbia* as a positive designation of pride in their poetic accomplishments, a move made possible by the dramatic changes in Roman politics and society. I begin outlining the semantics of Roman pride with a discussion of the etymology and meaning of the main Roman terms for pride (section 2) and then focus on the particularly intriguing case of *superbia* and related words (*superbus* and *superbire*) (section 3). My goal is, by concentrating on the one concept that seems to lend itself to a positive interpretation, to understand the status of pride as a peculiarly Roman anti-value. Using Livy's account of Tarquinius Superbus, I explore why positive pride is incompatible with Roman republican values (section 4) and then turn to the transformation of *superbia* in the changing ideological landscape of the Augustan period (section 5).

2. *Semantics of Roman arrogance*

2.1. Adrogantia

In the semantic cluster of Roman pride, the etymologically transparent *adrogantia* is the quality of claiming more than properly belongs to one, more than one truly deserves. The importance of correlating claims and actual deserts is apparent in the grammarians' definitions:[10]

> Someone is said to arrogantly appropriate something for oneself, even if he has not deserved it.
>
> adrogat aliquid sibi, etiamsi non meruit.

> Someone is said to arrogantly appropriate, if he claims something for oneself that is more than what is right, and does not look to the judgment of others, but relies on his own.
>
> adrogat qui sibi aliquid plus iusto adsumit nec aliorum expectat iudicium, sed suo nititur.

Thus, in structure the etymology of *adrogantia* closely resembles Aristotle's definition of *megalopsukhia* and the two related vices since it is based

[10] [Fronto], *Diff.*, Gramm. Lat. VII 523.13 Keil, Beck 1883, 28.

on the comparison between claims and real worth. The second definition is particularly important as it emphasizes both the existence of an external standard, *iusto*, what is right, and significance of the social element in determining what constitutes *adrogantia*: it emerges as the vice of self-absorption, resulting from the identity of the claimant and the judge, leaving the judgment of one's peers out of the equation.

An examination of the usage in surviving texts[11] shows that the word frequently occurs in contexts of self-promotion and overvaluing of one's accomplishments.[12] The first attested occurrences of the abstract noun come from the roughly contemporary rhetorical treatises of the early first century BCE: the anonymous *Rhetorica ad Herennium* and Cicero's *de Inventione*. It is a problem facing the orator that leads to the discussion of *adrogantia* in the context of *captatio benevolentiae*: he needs to represent himself in terms that will appeal to the audience, yet without appearing to blow his own horn. Thus the *Auctor* of *ad Herennium* begins his treatment of *benevolentia* with the first of four sources that can bring the orator the goodwill of the audience (*Rhet. Her.* 1.8):[13]

> We will gather goodwill based on our own person if we praise our services without arrogance, and how we have been disposed towards the state, or towards our parents, or friends, or the members of the audience.
>
> ab nostra persona benevolentiam contrahemus si nostrum officium sine adrogantia laudabimus, atque in rem publicam quales fuerimus, aut in parentes, aut in amicos, aut in eos qui audiunt.

Here, and in the corresponding passage in *de Inventione*,[14] the social and practical consequences of *adrogantia* are implicit: it causes hostility among those who encounter it, which, for an orator, is likely to lead to his losing the case. The non-alignment of external and internal judgment, central to the semantics of the word in the definitions quoted

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[11] All examples are from prose, since *adrogantia* does not occur in poetry for metrical reasons. Unless stated otherwise, all translations are my own.

[12] For self-praise in Cicero see Kaster, Princeton/Stanford Working Papers in Classics.

[13] *Rhet. Her.* 1.8: 'we can make listeners be well disposed towards us in four ways: based on our own person, that of our opponents, that of the listeners themselves, and based on the very facts of the case' (*benivolos auditores facere quattuor modis possumus: ab nostra, ab adversariorum nostrorum, ab auditorum persona, et ab rebus ipsis*).

[14] Cic. *Inv.* 1.22: 'goodwill is generated from four sources: from our own person, from that of our opponents, that of the judges, from the case. From our person, when we shall speak of our deeds and services without arrogance' (*benevolentia quattuor ex locis comparatur: ab nostra, ab adversariorum, ab iudicum persona, a causa. ab nostra, si de nostris factis et officiis sine arrogantia dicemus*).

above, is confirmed for these passages by a useful definition found in Grillius' comment on the Cicero passage:

> Arrogance is that which usurps for itself something that it does not have; for to speak of demonstrated merit is not *arrogantia.*
>
> arrogantia est, quae sibi aliquid, quod not habet, usurpat; nam probata merita dicere non est arrogantia.

Taking more than is proper is the foundation of *arrogantia* here, but just as important is the additional emphasis on verbal claims, representation rather than action, and the necessity of external judgment for avoiding *adrogantia.*[15]

Adrogantia then is figured in these prescriptive rhetorical texts as something to be avoided and, by implication, as a quality from which the authors distance themselves. In his typically hostile discussion of Greek rhetorical theory in the beginning of the treatise, the *Auctor* does identify a group that, in contrast, is characterized by *adrogantia* in his eyes (*Rhet. Her.* 1.1):

> And I undertook this task [of writing the treatise as a gift for Herennius] with all the more zeal, since I was aware that you wanted to learn rhetoric not without a reason: for eloquent and duly measured speech can bear much fruit if it is governed by correct understanding and strict regulation of the mind. And for this reason I have left aside those things that Greek writers have added to their sphere for the sake of empty arrogance. For they, lest they seem not to know enough, went after those things that were not in the least relevant, so that their art might be thought to be more difficult to master; I, on the other hand, have taken up only what seems to be related to the study of speaking.
>
> et eo studiosius hoc negotium suscepimus, quod te non sine causa velle cognoscere rhetoricam intellegebamus: non enim in se parum fructus habet copia dicendi et *commoditas* orationis, si *recta* intellegentia et *definita* animi *moderatione gubernetur.* quas ob res illa, quae Graeci scriptores inanis adrogantiae causa sibi *adsumpserunt*, reliquimus. nam illi, ne parum multa scisse viderentur, ea *conquisierunt*, quae nihil adtinebant, ut ars *difficilior* cognitu putaretur, nos autem ea, quae videbantur ad rationem dicendi pertinere, sumpsimus.

The *Auctor* attempts to distance himself from the Greek teachers of rhetoric, a threat to his elite Roman identity inherent in undertaking a task normally associated with Greeks who trade in their craft. To

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[15] It is also significant that Grillius defines *probata merita dicere* negatively, as not amounting to *adrogantia*, whereas, if a positive pride concept, such as Aristotle's *megalopsukhia*, were readily available, he could have used it instead.

do so, he implicitly defines *adrogantia* as lacking exactly the good qualities that he presents as associated with his own brand of rhetorical teaching, which he is trying to elevate. What is especially striking in his description of what he has to offer is the prevalence of ideas of control and correct proportion: *copia dicendi*, which contains the seeds of expansiveness, is balanced by *commoditas*, a word whose relationship to *modus*, measure, limit, is picked up by *moderatio* in the following clause. *Moderatio*, the proper regulation of the mind, is made more emphatic by the additional force of ends and limits contained in the adjective chosen to modify it, *definita*, and the entire discipline is in need of control: the sentence ends with *gubernetur*. The improper expansion characteristic of the Greek rhetoricians is conveyed through verbs of acquisitiveness, *adsumpserunt* and *conquisierunt*, and the final outcome of their approach is that the discipline is rendered *difficilior cognitu*. The missing part of the comparison is easy to deduce: more difficult than it actually is, with the same mismatch between representation and reality that is present in the Aristotelian definition of excessive pride.

Before moving on to the next lexical item, it will be useful to look at a set of examples that comes from a non-rhetorical source to see if the pattern identified thus far in the rhetorical and grammatical texts is confirmed. One of the first authors to use the abstract noun *adrogantia* is Caesar. The *commentarii* contain five instances, three in *Bellum Gallicum* and two in *Bellum Civile*, with another two found in book eight of *BG* written by Hirtius. In *BG* the word is used twice of Ariovistus, once (1.33.5) to describe his oppression of the Sequani, and the second time (1.46.4) in reference to the exaggerated claims he makes in his talks with Caesar. The remaining example (7.52.3) occurs in Caesar's reprimand of the soldiers for presuming to understand strategic matters (*de victoria atque exitu rerum*) better than himself.[16] In all these cases, what is labeled as *adrogantia* results from lack of understanding of one's proper position in relation to others. The two instances found in Hirtius (*BG* 8.1) serve as a nice complement, since Hirtius, in presenting himself as taking over Caesar's task, is particularly concerned to defend himself against the potential *crimen arrogantiae*, in his case, the presumption to be an equal of Caesar.[17] He emphasizes that he undertook the writing with great hesitation (*quam invitus susceperim scribendos, BG* 8.1.3).

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[16] The desired qualities that are opposed to *adrogantia* in this passage are *modestia* and *continentia* (7.52.4).

[17] 8.1.3: '… so that I may more easily be free of the charge of stupidity and

The first example from the *BC* comes in Caesar's response to Afranius in the surrender negotiations that followed a long series of deprivations for the Pompeian troops (Caes. *BC* 1.85.4):

> Therefore what happened to them was what usually happens due to men's excessive stubbornness and arrogance, that they come back to that thing, and seek after it with greatest desire, which they looked down on a little earlier.
>
> accidisse igitur his, quod plerumque hominum nimia pertinacia atque arrogantia accidere soleat, uti eo recurrant et id cupidissime petant, quod paulo ante contempserint.

What Afranius and Petreius perceive as loyalty, Caesar portrays as being stubborn, *pertinacia*. The content of *adrogantia* in this instance seems to reside in incorrect evaluation of one's situation: the generals think they are in a position to look down on Caesar's earlier offer and have greater freedom than they turn out actually to have, as their having to ask for terms themselves later demonstrates.

The final instance comes from a narrative about two Allobrogian brothers who betray Caesar and desert to Pompey (Caes. *BC* 3.59.3):

> These men, on account of their courage, were not only honored by Caesar, but were also dear to the army; but, relying on Caesar's friendship and puffed up by stupid and barbarous arrogance, they were looking down on their own men and stealing from the pay of the cavalry, then diverting all the loot home.
>
> hi propter virtutem non solum apud Caesarem in honore erant, sed etiam apud exercitum cari habebantur; sed freti amicitia Caesaris et stulta ac barbara arrogantia elati despiciebant suos stipendiumque equitum fraudabant et praedam omnem domum avertebant.

The brothers' claims are based on real accomplishments that are recognized by Caesar and by the troops; their mistake, which is here identified as *adrogantia*, is misjudging how far their *virtus* and their relationship with Caesar could take them. As becomes apparent from what follows, they expect total impunity and find even a private reprimand below their dignity: their estimate and the social reality, which is embodied

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arrogance' (… *quo facilius caream stultitiae atque arrogantiae crimine*); 8.1.9: 'but while I excessively compile all the reasons for excusing myself from being compared with Caesar, in that very act I lay myself open to the charge of arrogance, since I deem that, in someone's judgment, I can be compared with Caesar' (*sed ego nimirum dum omnes excusationis causas colligo ne cum Caesare conferar, hoc ipso crimen arrogantiae subeo, quod me iudicio cuiusquam existimem posse cum Caesare comparari*).

first in the reaction of the troops and then, more importantly, in Caesar's response, are not equivalent. They are unable to accept the 'real' status Caesar is trying to impose on them and desert, bringing information to Pompey. Thus their *adrogantia* ends up harming those above and below them, because they overestimate both their distance from the rest of the army and their closeness to Caesar. The overall pattern found in Caesar's usage thus confirms the general content of the concept identified by the grammarians and found in the rhetorical texts: *adrogantia* is an unreasonably high self-valuation that is in conflict with one's real worth as revealed through the opinion of others.

2.2. Fastus

The derivation of the next member of the group, *fastus*, is somewhat uncertain, but there is a consensus in connecting it to *fastigium* and *fastigare* and thus the idea of being pointy and prickly, which in turn develops into being at the top.[18] Thus the etymology of this word combines the connotation of superiority, common to the entire arrogance group, with that of sharpness, which in the metaphorical, emotional realm concentrates on the potentially harmful front the bearer of the emotion presents to others. This interpretation of the word's origin is borne out by dominant usage. Like *adrogantia*, *fastus* designates pride that is excessive, out of proportion with actual deserts, but the primary orientation of judgment is reversed: in the case of *adrogantia*, the focus is one's overestimation of self and the clash between resulting self-presentation and the judgment of others, while *fastus* more frequently designates excessive pride when it expresses itself in undervaluing others. The word is first found in Catullus,[19] in a poem addressed to Camerius who is nowhere to be found, the reason being, his friend assumes, a new girl (*Cat.* 55.13–14):

> But it is already a Herculean task to put up with you;
> with such arrogance you hide yourself, my friend.
>
> sed te iam ferre Herculi labos est;
> tanto te in fastu negas, amice.

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[18] Ernout–Meillet 1967 *s.v. fastus* direct the reader to *fastigo* ('incliner, efflier, construire en pente ou en pointe'). The tentative status of the Indo-European parallels is emphasized in both articles (*fastus*: 'Aucun rapprochement net', *fastigo*: 'Le tout peu net').

[19] It is exclusively poetic until it is used by Seneca the Younger.

The situation is fairly conventional: Horace's Sybaris in *Carm.* 1.8 disappears from a similar set of usual haunts because of a love-affair; Catullus is still looking for Camerius in 58b,[20] and another friend, addressed by Catullus in poem 6, Flavius, is hiding a new girlfriend and for that is hounded in a similar manner.[21] But whereas in Flavius' case the reason for the hiding imputed to him by the poet is shame—he is imagined as self-consciously embarrassed by the ugliness of the new love-object—the reference to *fastus* combined with *negare* projects a different power dynamic in poem 55. Camerius is denying his friends what they are rightfully entitled to, his company, and his behavior is interpreted as resulting from treating his equals as his inferiors:[22] he devalues them, and deprives the relationship of its due importance. In doing so he is acting tyrannically: the friends are forced to endure his *fastus* as Hercules was forced to endure his labors at the command of Eurystheus. That comparison, by aligning the poet with Hercules, indicates that Camerius is mistaken in his estimation of the power dynamic. Catullus closes the poem with a statement of a friend's right to be privy to love-affairs, a somewhat gentler version of the similar sentiment found in poem 6. In this case, the imbalance created by Camerius' purported *fastus* is restored by the poem's aggression.

An interesting example is found in Horace's *Satires*, where two systems of valuation, one based on a generalized social value rooted in conventional Roman hierarchy and another based on personal affection and debt of gratitude, are brought into conflict. In his defensive affirmation of his satisfaction with and respect for his father, the poet imagines a world where everyone could choose one's own parents (Hor. *Serm.* 1.6, 93–97):

> for if nature ordered
> after a certain age to relive the years already past over again
> and, to feed our pride, to choose other parents, whichever ones
> one wished for himself, I, content with my own, would not wish
> to acquire ones honored by high office.

[20] On the relationship between 55 and 58b and the possibly unfinished state of both, see Thomson 1997, 335, with further bibliography 338–339.

[21] Cat. 6.1–3: 'Flavius, you would want to speak of your sweetheart to Catullus, and would not be able to stay quiet, unless she were unattractive and inelegant' (*Flavi, delicias tuas Catullo,/ ni sint illepidae atque inelegantes,/velles dicere nec tacere posses*).

[22] On *fastus* as opposed to equality cf. *Laus Pisonis* 129–132: … *tu mitis et acri / asperitate carens positoque per omnia fastu / inter ut aequales unus numeraris amicos, / obsequiumque doces et amorem quaeris amando*. The flattering picture of affable Piso among his clients directly links his setting aside of *fastus* and his treating his clients as equals.

nam si natura iuberet
a certis annis aevum remeare peractum
atque alios legere ad fastum quoscumque parentes
optaret sibi quisque, meis contentus honestos
fascibus et sellis nollem mihi sumere.

While the kind of arrogance that would lead one to reject one's ancestors in favor of a better set combines the high opinion of oneself with looking down on them, the emphasis is on the latter aspect: the focus of this satire is the defense of the qualities of Horace's father, admirable despite his low status, not on Horace himself, and thus the *fastus* that would lead a son to reject such a father must be conceived of primarily in relation to the parent, who would not be getting his due.[23] This implication is made clear in Porphyry's comment on this use of *fastus*: 'in accordance with contempt, and through it, proudly' (*ad fastidium et per hoc superbe*). *Fastidium*, a cognate of *fastus*, is always concerned with a reaction to something that is perceived as low,[24] and Porphyry identifies it as lying at the source of the kind of pride that Horace is describing.

This type of valuation is not limited to persons, as we see in the passage in which Propertius is warning Cynthia of the dangers of returning his affections too late (Prop. 1.7, 25–26):

You take care lest you look down on my poems in your pride:
Love that comes late often comes with much interest.

tu cave nostra tuo contemnas carmina fastu:
saepe venit magno faenore tardus Amor.

In this case, *fastus* is expressed not just through rejection of Propertius and his affections, but primarily through Cynthia's undervaluing of the quality of his poetry.[25] The 'downward' direction of the emotion is emphasized by the pairing of *fastus* with *contemnas*. Here, as in

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[23] Cf. Tacitus' description of Vonones' provoking the Parthians with his disdainful behavior, which included acting with *fastu … erga patrias epulas* (*Ann.* 2.2.). Vonones prefers the customs of Rome, his adopted home, to those of his ancestral land, and it is the unreasonable assignment of low value to Parthian customs that in the eyes of the Parthians, who are the focalizers of this passage, amounts to *fastus*.

[24] This is one facet of *fastidium*. For a detailed study of this concept, which also encompasses, e.g., 'revulsion resulting from overexposure to ordinarily appealing things', see Kaster 2005, ch. 5.

[25] A prominent appearance of *fastus* in Propertius is in the first poem of the *Monobiblos* (Prop. 1.1.3–4): 'then Love forced down the eyes of my persistent arrogance / and with his feet trampled my head' (*tum mihi constantis deiecit lumina fastus / et caput impositis pressit Amor pedibus*). Here, it is the speaker's inappropriate arrogance directed at love in general that is punished by a radical reversal in the power dynamic, with Amor taking

the Catullus poem discussed above, the incorrect and unjust nature of the addressee's evaluation is conveyed through the promise of comeuppance.

2.3. Insolentia

The next word, *insolentia*, is a derivational conflation of two separate roots.[26] One strand is connected to the rare *insolesco*, meaning to swell up; the other, very common and quite transparent, to *insolesco* derived from *soleo*, be accustomed to. *Insolentia* then refers both to doing something unexpected and unusual, seen negatively, and expanding beyond normal limits. The two meanings are clearly easy to reconcile in the context of human pride. As with *adrogantia*, the mismatch between reality and representation is paramount. For instance Seneca, in discussing the relationship of wealth to the true good, contrasts *insolentia* and *magnitudo animi* (Sen. *Ep.* 87.32):

> It is fitting that all good things, however, lack blame; they are pure, they do not corrupt minds, nor excite them; indeed they elevate and expand them, but without swelling. Things that are good generate self-confidence; wealth, temerity; things that are good produce greatness of soul; wealth, insolence. For insolence is nothing other than a false appearance of greatness.
>
> bona autem omnia carere culpa decet; pura sunt, non corrumpunt animos, non sollicitant; extollunt quidem et dilatant, sed sine tumore. quae bona sunt fiduciam faciunt, divitiae audaciam; quae bona sunt magnitudinem animi dant, divitiae insolentiam. nihil autem aliud est insolentia quam species magnitudinis falsa.

The distinction that Seneca is working to establish is a subtle one: a certain elevation and increase are to result from the possession of the truly good, but that elevation cannot be excessive. I will come back to the term he chooses to describe the excessive expansion he associates with wealth, *tumor*, and its relationship to the Latin pride discourse in the conclusion to this section. For now, it is enough to note that the distinction between *dilatio* and *tumor* is not an obvious one and is thus a sign of the close similarity between the phenomena that Seneca is trying to distinguish. It becomes easier to indicate the difference once he moves

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charge of the situation and entirely stripping the speaker of his dignity. For the alternate interpretation of the genitive *fastus* see Camps 1961, *ad loc.* Cf. Richardson 1977, *ad loc.*

[26] Ernout–Meillet 1967, *s.v. insolesco*.

from the metaphors based in the physical world to evaluative moral terminology. Both *fiducia* and *audacia* are feelings of self-confidence, but the difference lies in the relationship between the extent of the agent's claim and the external perception of it. *Fiducia* then represents an external validation and *audacia* the condemnation of the claim as a sign of overreaching.[27] The final contrast, between *magnitudo animi* and *insolentia* fits in a framework created by the two previously established sets of opposites, and its formulation recalls Aristotle's discussion of *megalopsukhia* vs. *khaunotês*: the insolent man's claim will not be grounded in real accomplishment.

A passage from Sallust's *Jugurtha* demonstrates that *insolentia* also appears in contexts of self-promotion similar to those in which *adrogantia* commonly occurs (Sall. *Iug.* 4.1–2):

> But among other activities that are conducted through the spirit, it is the record of deeds that is of especially great benefit. But since many have spoken about the excellence of [this pursuit], I think that I must leave it aside, lest someone think that it is because of insolence that I am raising up my occupation by heaping praise on it.
>
> ceterum ex aliis negotiis quae ingenio exercentur in primis magno usui est memoria rerum gestarum. cuius de virtute quia multi dixere, praetereundum puto, simul ne per insolentiam quis existimet memet studium meum laudando extollere.

Extollere, which was associated with the true good and distinguished from *insolentia* in the Seneca passage above, is given a negative interpretation by Sallust. As in the rhetorical texts dealing with *adrogantia* and Hirtius' worry about being seen as usurping Caesar's place, the danger of being found guilty of overvaluing oneself dominates Sallust's self-presentation and forms part of a larger concern about constructing his history-writing as comparable to active service to the state (*memoria* as *negotium* in this passage), further colored by the apology for his less than pure senatorial past. He resorts to *praeteritio* to assert the importance of his task and to distance himself (*memet*) from the claim.

A comparison with *fastus* helps give substance to another aspect of the semantics of *insolentia*. While *fastus* centers on undervaluing others,

[27] *Fiducia* is contrasted with *adrogantia* in a similar context of authorial self-justification in the preface to Tacitus *Agricola* (1.3): 'and many have deemed that to tell the story of one's own life was self-confidence rather than arrogance' (*ac plerique suam ipsi vitam narrare fiduciam potius morum quam adrogantiam arbitrati sunt*). Cf. also Quint. 4.1.33: 'self-confidence itself often suffers because it gives the appearance of arrogance' (*fiducia ipsa solet opinione adrogantiae laborare*).

especially treating equals as inferiors, *insolentia* is often ascribed to those that treat their superiors as equals; it is an upward-directed instantiation of arrogance. A good example is found in Livy's account of the appearance of Aetolian ambassadors in the Roman senate (37.49.1–4):

> When the Aetolian ambassadors were led into the senate, both their situation and fortune were urging them to acknowledge [their wrongdoing] and to ask for forgiveness as suppliants, whether they present it as a crime or a mistake. But instead they started from what they had done for the Roman people and virtually made a reproach of their bravery in the war against Philip. In this way they both offended the senators' ears with the insolence of their speech and, by repeating old and long forgotten matters, got to the point where the memory of their misdeeds, of which there were quite a few more than of services, entered into the minds of the fathers. Thus the Aetolians, in need of pity, aroused anger and hatred. Asked by one senator whether they allowed the Roman people to make judgment about them, then by another whether they intended to have the same allies and enemies as the Roman people, when they made no response, they were ordered to leave the temple.
>
> Aetoli legati in senatum introducti, cum et causa eos sua et fortuna hortaretur, ut confitendo seu culpae seu errori ueniam supplices peterent, orsi a beneficiis in populum Romanum et prope exprobrantes uirtutem suam in Philippo bello et offenderunt aures insolentia sermonis et eo, uetera et oblitterata repetendo, rem adduxerunt, ut haud paulo plurium maleficiorum gentis quam beneficiorum memoria subiret animos patrum, et quibus misericordia opus erat, iram et odium irritarent. interrogati ab uno senatore, permitterentne arbitrium de se populo Romano, deinde ab altero, habiturine eosdem quos populus Romanus socios et hostis essent, nihil ad ea respondentes egredi templo iussi sunt.

The contrast that is being set up in this incident is between the situation of the Aetolians as it is seen by the Romans, whose perspective is adopted by the narrative, and their speech. On the one hand, their *fortuna* and *causa*, that is, the reality of their situation, should be pointing them towards asking for forgiveness and acting as suppliants: the power inequality implied by the use of *supplices* is quite strong and promotes the expectation that the Aetolians should be surrendering themselves entirely to the mercy of the senate as is proper in the context of a *deditio*.[28] Their verbal behavior, however, displays the exact opposite of what the Romans are expecting: they are first reminding them of the services they performed in the past, setting themselves up as equals engaged in exchange of *beneficia*, and then move beyond it: *exprobrantes*

[28] See Briscoe 1981, *ad* 36.27.6–7 for parallels.

indicates that they assume what is in fact the attitude of a superior towards an inferior; far from acting as suppliants they remind the Romans of a time when the Roman people were almost in a suppliant position in relation to them. The Aetolians' refusal to respond to the formal request for a *deditio* put to them by the two senators attempting to reinstate the power dynamic as seen by the Romans is thus all the more insulting and leads to their expulsion from the senate meeting. *Insolentia orationis* in this instance is constituted as an inferior party's failure to recognize their true status and their attempt to act out the status they claim to have, in the context, falsely. Their performance results in serious injury to the dignity of the superior party (*offenderunt*), and their success in overturning the paradigm being imposed by the Romans is indicated by the fact that instead of evoking the emotion the stronger feels towards the weaker, *misericordia*, they stir up anger and hatred, a combination of emotions more commonly felt by the helpless towards the powerful.

This connotation allows the word to be rhetorically exploited in contexts where the speaker/narrator wants to hint at such offensive behavior, as for instance in Caesar's speech to the senate as reported in the first book of *Bellum Civile*. Having passed into Italy and left his troops near Rome, Caesar himself enters the city, deserted by Pompey, and calls together a meeting of the senate. In enumerating the injustices against himself and justifying his actions, he lays the responsibility at the feet of the senate (Caes. *BC* 1.32.6):

> He proclaimed the insult of having his legions stripped from him, and the cruelty and insolence of restraining the tribunes of the plebs.
>
> iniuriam in eripiendis legionibus praedicat, crudelitatem et insolentiam in circumscribendis tribunis plebis.

Caesar presents himself as a champion of his own dignity and of the rights of the tribunes in equal measure. The use of *insolentia* gets to the issue of power relations between the senate and the people, as represented by the tribunes. In asserting the people's prerogatives Caesar thus portrays the senate as having overstepped the limits of its true role and having attacked as inferiors those who are in fact superior by virtue of their position.

What emerges from this overview of the three members of the 'arrogance' cluster is the fact that, while each of these three words has its own semantic niche, there is a significant amount of overlap both in the etymology and in the semantics. Additional factors contribute to

increase the impression of semantic closeness: these three words, and *superbia*, which will be the focus of the rest of this chapter, are often combined in synonym pairs or modified by corresponding adjectives,[29] and certain ideas recur with all three, such as the fact that these qualities are hard to bear and tolerate, expressed through adjectives such as *gravis, intolerabilis*, or verbs such as *ferre*,[30] and the association between these words and the idea of swelling, through the use of *tumidus* and *tumor*, already seen in the passage from Seneca's *Epistles* above.[31] The latter combination is particularly interesting with *insolentia*, as it picks up on the no longer transparent affiliation between *insolesco* and *intumesco*. On a general level, then, the three words for pride discussed so far are all formed and used in an unambiguously negative way to present someone's failure to correctly apprehend the balance of power, usually between two parties, that is presented as objectively true by the texts. In other words, these phenomena are manifestations of mismatch between internal and external judgment.

3. *The case of the* superbia *group*

The fourth member of the cluster, *superbia*, with the related adjective *superbus* and verb *superbire*, is the only one whose etymology makes a positive meaning hypothetically possible, and I will focus on this group for the rest of the chapter. In itself, the comparative formation with

[29] Synonym pairs: e.g. Charisius' definition *superbus non sum. superbiam vito. adrogans non sum. insolens non sum. nihil mihi adsumo. insolentiam fugio* (411.23–25 Barwick); Cic. *Phil.* 8.21 *M. Antoni … insolentiam superbiamque perspeximus*; Ov. *Fasti* 1.419: *fastus inest pulchris sequiturque superbia formam*; Plin. *Nat.* 11.138: *haec [facies] maxime indicant fastum, superbiam*; Cic. *Inv.* 1.105: *in superbiam et arrogantiam odium concitatur*; *Phil.* 2.84: *sed adrogantiam hominis insolentiamque cognoscite*; and the rather striking Cic. *Inv.* 1.42, under *eventus*: *ex insolentia, arrogantia*. Modified by corresponding adjectives: e.g. Prop. 3.25.15 *fastus patiare superbos*; Sen. *Dial.* 12.1.13: *quis tam superbae inpotentisque adrogantiae est*; Plin. *Nat.* 9.119 (on Cleopatra) *superbo simul ac procaci fastu*.

[30] Adjectives: *Rhet. Her.* 4.1.2 *si se omnibus anteponant, intolerabili adrogantia sunt*; Cic. *Cluent.* 109 *quam gravis et intolerabilis adrogantia*; Suet. *Galba* 14 *Cornelius Laco … arrogantia socordiaque intolerabilis*. Verbs: *ferre*, e.g. Caes. *BG* 1.33.5 (mentioned above) *Ariovistus tantos sibi spiritus, tantam arrogantiam sumpserat, ut ferendus non videretur*; Verg. *A.* 3.326–327: *stirpis Achilleae fastus iuuenemque superbum / seruitio enixae tulimus*; Sil. 11.150–151: *fastus exanguis populi uanumque tumorem nimirum Capua et dominatum perferat urbis*.

[31] Further examples: Sil. 11.150 in the previous note, Val. Max. 1.5.8: *ut rapacissimi uictoris insolentiam dicti tumore protraheret*; Ammian. 14.11.26 *fastus tumentes*, Iust. 39.2.1 *Alexander… tumens successu rerum, spernere iam etiam ipsum Ptolomeum, a quo subornatus in regnum fuerat, superba insolentia coepit*.

super- could admit both of a positive meaning, as in exceeding expectations and overcoming limitations—in this case the internal and external valuation would be in agreement, and the mismatch would be between expectation and actual achievement—and a negative one, analogous to *adrogantia*, with the connotation of transgressing and overreaching. It is only the latter, however, that is attested in Latin literature up to Horace and persists as the primary meaning all the way to the late grammarians. Isidore gives the following conveniently concise definition of the proud man in the *Origines* (Isid. *Orig.* 10.248):

> [one is] called proud because he wants to seem to be more than he is; for he who wants to overstep what he is, is proud.
>
> superbus dictus quia super vult videri quam est; qui enim vult supergredi quod est, superbus est.

Looking back to Aristotle's account we can see that Isidore's first definition closely parallels the structure of Aristotle's excessive pride: it is not simply the fact of superiority that lies at the basis of *superbia*; rather it is the disconnect between the individual's desired perception of his worth and his true stature that results in a desire to escape what one is by stepping over a boundary. *Superbia* then is intimately connected to transgression, both in self-presentation and action. As such it fits neatly with the other words that designate pride, presenting a uniformly negative conceptualization of this quality. The inability of the language to express positive pride is surprising, given both the hierarchical nature of Roman society, with the position of one class above another constantly reinforced, as well as the robust sense of national preeminence. We may have expected that it would be *superbia*, the word whose etymology allows for a fairly neutral statement of superiority, that would evolve into a positive designation of pride. Why does it fail to do so?

Two related factors seem to be at work in creating a cultural environment that necessitates displacement of pride as a positive concept from Roman discourse. First, the formation of a political system that is designed to prevent the accumulation of excessive power in the hands of one member of the elite to the detriment of the class as a whole results in a predominantly negative perception of superiority as potentially dangerous and suppression of explicit positive expressions of preeminence by the members of the elite.[32]

[32] Cf. Cicero's presentation of *leges, mos maiorum* and *instituta* as controls on the power

Second, the reason that largely political values, such as this repression of pride, become dominant in developing the national cultural discourse has to do with the primarily political nature of the Roman republican elite. In most societies, the position of the elite is generally founded on a confluence of different forces, such as birth, economic status, religious and political standing, but it is usually possible to isolate one of the elements as playing the primary role.[33] Thus, while all of the four elements named contribute to status formation in republican Rome, it is political success that remains predominant, in practice[34] and even more so in ideology. Given the pervasive influence of the elite in all areas of Roman life, the cultural values that gain currency during the Republic[35] are thus political at their foundation, even though their importance extends well beyond the strictly political spheres.[36] Thus, the perceived danger of pride among the quasi-egalitarian republican elite should be a sufficient explanation for the generally negative

of the individual in his address to M. Lepidus in *Phil.* 13.14, with discussion in Brennan 2004, 33–34, who also demonstrates the limitations of Cicero's rhetorical emphasis on limits on legitimate power through the example of the elder M. Aemilius Lepidus' spectacular accumulation of honors. The occasional emergence of extraordinary individuals who did in practice overstep the limits with some degree of acquiescence from their peers does not, however, overturn the status of the ideological desideratum as such. Cf. Brennan 2004, 56: 'Yet there was a rough system of formal and informal checks and balances in place that worked well enough over a period of some centuries to make figures such as Sulla and Caesar outsized exceptions'.

[33] E.g., birth in *ancien régime* France, economic status in a capitalist society, religion in Shamanism-practicing cultures of Siberia.

[34] Cf. Lintott 1999, 164: 'Descent from a family already renowned was always a great advantage, a certain amount of wealth was a *sine qua non*. Yet the ascent to the highest magistracy proceeded through popular elections, and success there required at least some evidence of personal excellence and achievement, *virtus* and *facta*'. See his discussion 1999, 164–170. Cf. Earl 1967, 12: 'It was a *political* aristocracy, defined precisely by holding of political power and political office.'

[35] And also, to a large extent, during the empire, due to their conceptualization as 'Roman values' and the continuing idealization of the Republic.

[36] This argument complements Habinek's account of the formation of Latin literature as the traditional aristocracy's response to its new position at the head of an empire following the Second Punic War (2001, ch. 2: 'The Invention of Latin Literature'). Habinek emphasizes the ideological competition between the aristocracy and the emerging mercantile class, and the role of literature in spreading aristocratic values beyond the confines of traditional aristocratic performance. While my focus is on competition within the aristocracy itself, the mechanism that I posit for the spread of the anti-pride ideology (internal to the aristocracy) into the society as a whole is similar to Habinek's model.

status of pride and its construction in terms of a mismatch between the individual's opinion of himself and the collective judgment of his peers.[37]

While it is impossible to trace the origins of this conceptualization, it is best exemplified by the connection, which must have emerged early and remained prominent throughout the Republic, between the *superbia* cluster and the legendary figure of Tarquinius Superbus; in turn, the prominence of Tarquin in the account that republican Romans gave of their past must have contributed to pride becoming inextricably linked to the idea of tyrannical rule and more generally overreaching in the political arena.[38] This point is made explicitly by Scipio in Cicero's *De Republica* (Cic. *Rep.* 1.62):

> Do you not see that because of insolence and pride of Tarquin alone the name 'king' became hateful to this people?
>
> tu non vides unius inportunitate et superbia Tarquinii nomen huic populo in odium venisse regium?

Cicero also singles out *superbia* as a specifically regal quality in the Third *Philippic*, in a passage that demonstrates the inability to endure and bear it, a feature that was identified as shared by the semantic cluster of negative pride in the conclusion to the previous section (Cic. *Phil.* 3.9):

> That Tarquin, whom our ancestors did not tolerate, is considered and named not cruel, not impious, but proud; and the vice that we have often endured in the case of private citizens, our ancestors were not able to bear even in a king.
>
> ille Tarquinius, quem maiores nostri non *tulerunt*, non crudelis, non impius, sed superbus est habitus et dictus; quod nos vitium in privatis saepe *tulimus*, id maiores nostri ne in rege quidem *ferre* potuerunt.

In this text, which brings to the fore the prominent vices of Tarquinius that did not become associated with his person in the same way as pride, although they too belong to the same complex of tyrannical qualities, *superbia* then becomes the anti-republican quality *par excellence* and this status is confirmed by the fact that it is frequently found in

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[37] On the connection between the personal and the social with the political in Rome see Earl 1967, 11–43.

[38] I refer here to the story of Tarquin and the foundation of the Republic as it was known during the periods known to us from primary sources, regardless of its historical status. On the controversial question of historicity and related issues see e.g. Ogilvie 1976, 79–91, Cornell 1995, 215–226.

conjunction with accusations of aiming at *regnum*.[39] To understand how *superbia* is constructed in connection with Tarquin, it will be useful to examine Livy's narrative of his rule and overthrow, which showcases how the political incarnation of *superbia* in the excessive allocation of resources and power to one individual/family results in endless desire for increase at the expense of others.

4. *The pride of the Tarquins in Livy*

The section dealing with Tarquin's rise to power relies heavily on the recurring theme of *scelus*, thus marking that as the first dominant characteristic of tyrannical *superbia*.[40] Referring primarily to the murder of Servius Tullius and the violation of his body by his daughter, *scelus* is rooted in the narrative through the aetiology of the name of the district where Tullia's crime took place, the Vicus Sceleratus. Livy's repeated use of the word *scelus*—eight times in the narrative of Tarquin's takeover in sections 46–48 of book one[41]—serves to emphasize that the kind of superiority exemplified by Tarquin and Tullia is not based on their intrinsic qualities: it is arrived at by violently asserting one's position above others. Ovid, typically, picks up on the prominence of *scelus* in his retelling of the episode in the *Fasti*, when he has his Tullia say to Tarquin 'crime is a royal business' (*regia res scelus est*).[42] The other important element of the externally manifested *superbia* that is being established in this part of the narrative is its lack of closure, its endless escalation: Tarquin's ambition, identified and kindled by Tullia,[43] requires her pressure in the beginning, but becomes autonomously driven in the very process of committing *scelera*; likewise, the chain of murders required for his rise to kingship starts at the spouse/sibling level, where the murders of the couple's respective spouses are per-

[39] On the connection between *superbia* and accusations of *regnum* in Livy see Bruno 1966.

[40] *Tragicum scelus* at 1.46.3. For Livy's construction of the connection between monarchy and 'excesses of dramatic performance' (187) in this narrative see Feldherr 1998, 187–193.

[41] On repetition as a typical Livian technique cf. Kraus 1991, 314, with examples of two other verbal repetitions used to shape the story of Tarquinius (*ibid.* n. 2).

[42] Ov. *Fasti* 6.595. On Ovid's reworking of Livy's narratives see Murgatroyd 2005, 171–205, 201–205 on the Tullia narrative. Wiseman 1998, 30–34 argues for an awareness of a tragic source shared by both Livy and Ovid.

[43] For a recent discussion of Tullia's role and character see Kowalewski 2002, 75–84.

formed in secret and the manner of death is not specified, and culminates in the very public act of a daughter riding over her father's body.

Livy introduces the name *Superbus* once the transition of power is completed and Tarquin's reign proper begins: 'from that point Lucius Tarquinius began to rule, the man whose actions gave him the name "Proud"' (*inde L. Tarquinius regnare occepit, cui Superbo cognomen facta indiderunt*).[44] The list of those actions that follows, although it starts with a domestic and religious crime, the denial of burial to his father-in-law, figures *superbia* as primarily political and exercised in two ways: the physical destruction and intimidation of potential opponents and the appropriation of the traditional functions of the aristocracy into the private preserve of the king. The anti-aristocratic nature of Tarquin's rule has been discussed often.[45] What is important for my purposes is how Tarquin's behavior exemplifies *superbia* constructed negatively. One feature of it is the desire to maintain one's superiority not by repeated affirmation of one's true worth, but, since the internal and external estimation do not correspond, by removing all possibility of competition: once true superiority is removed from the field, it is easier for the unworthy to have their claims appear valid. Tarquin's unfounded *superbia* thus requires that the senate as a group be held in contempt, be seen as less than they truly are, and he achieves this goal by effectively proscribing the most threatening members and then stopping any further enrollment (1.49):

> With the number of senators thus diminished, he decided to elect no more so that the order itself be more disdained because of its smallness.
>
> patrum numero imminuto statuit nullos in patres legere, quo contemptior paucitate ipsa ordo esset.

In this instance, with its emphasis on engineering contempt, *superbia* seems most akin to *fastus*, and Tarquin is trying to eliminate competition by placing the rest of the society in a position of *fastus* in relation to the senate, a position comparable to his own, which would allow them also to feel contempt.

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[44] Liv. 1.49.1. Ogilvie 1965 *ad* 1.50.3 dates the name to the late fourth century.

[45] See e.g. Cornell 1995, 148–149. Cornell's discussion of the archaeological evidence demonstrates that the parallels with Greek tyrant narratives are not simply a case of literary influence, but of a genuine similarity in the historical developments in archaic Greece and archaic Rome (1995, 145–150, 237–238).

The resulting interdependent misalignment of worth and status presented in this general description of Tarquin's actions is then illustrated and developed in the major contrast provided by the behavior of the Tarquins on the one hand and Brutus on the other. The contrast between them corresponds nicely to the two vices that constitute the perversion of pride in Aristotelian terms. The Tarquins' perception of and insistence on their share of greatness is not commensurate with the community's sense of what is properly their due. At the same time, their overreaching forces Brutus to fall into the vice of lack of pride: as a matter of self-defense, he presents himself as less than what he is and does not lay a claim to the share of honor that correlates with his objective worth. Here, as in the account of Tarquin's suppression of the *patres*, contempt is the operative opposite that Tarquin's pride brings about. Yet conceptualizing Tarquin's *superbia* and Brutus' fashioning of himself as an object of contempt as mutually dependent opposites leaves no room for the possibility of positive pride, one that expects honor that is proportionate to real accomplishment and acknowledged by the wider community.

The story of Lucretia, as told by Livy, provides a corresponding dramatization of overreaching in the social sphere. The political expands into the social and sexual here in the person of Sextus Tarquinius. He first breaks the boundaries of family through his desire for adultery. It is significant, however, that his motivation is far from being primarily sexual: the inspiration for his attack on Lucretia, apart from a brief reference to her *forma*, is located entirely in her being acknowledged as exemplifying the best qualities of a Roman matron.[46] With a sense that the best of everything should be allocated to him as the member of the royal family, Sextus sets out to restore the balance by appropriating the best woman for himself, or, alternatively, displacing her from that position of virtue and making her an object of contempt. At the same time, his aggression is directed against her husband Collatinus, who is named *victor* in the *certamen* of wives, thus subverting the hierarchy required by the pride of the Tarquins.[47]

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[46] On Lucretia as an ideal matron see e.g. Kowalewski 2002, 107–123.

[47] Livy 1.57.9–10: 'The praise in the women's contest was Lucretia's. Her husband, when he arrived, and the Tarquins were kindly received: the victorious husband affably entertained the royal youths. There a destructive desire for forcibly possessing Lucretia took hold of Sextus Tarquinius; her outstanding chastity was urging him on as much as her beauty' (*muliebris certaminis laus penes Lucretiam fuit. adveniens vir Tarquiniique excepti*

Sextus' threat to posthumously convict Lucretia of adultery with a slave involves yet another kind of boundary that is endangered by the presence of excessive pride inherent in the Tarquins. It suggests that their uncontested place at the top of the hierarchy not only causes them to displace deserving members of the elite such as Brutus from their position, but also results in a lack of concern for the proper maintenance of hierarchical divisions in the rest of society. When Sextus finally prevails, the verb that Livy uses is *vinco* and his *libido* is labeled *victrix*, displacing the earlier designation of Collatinus as *victor* in the contest of wives.[48] This language of victory and conquest is additionally significant because the whole episode takes place during the siege of Ardea, where both Sextus and Collatinus are stationed. Further, Livy describes Sextus after the rape as *ferox expugnato decore muliebri*, with the conquest of Lucretia's reputation having taken the place of the capture of Ardea.[49] Sextus' pride thus illustrates yet another potential danger to the state: the privileging of the personal over the public interest that arises from overvaluing oneself. The language used here points both backwards and forwards. Sextus is *ferox* like Tullia, his mother, at 1.46.6: both the cruelty and the joy that he derives from his violent deed, the last in the series set in motion by her will, are characteristic of the Tarquins as a family. *Expugno*, here directed against a woman's honor, is redirected and turned against the Tarquins, when Livy uses it to describe the call to arms issued by Brutus following the revelation of Sextus' crime and Lucretia's suicide: *Brutum … ad expugnandum regnum vocantem* (1.59.2). But Sextus' main threat is directed against more than just the division between the free and the slaves. Given the pivotal role the rape of Lucretia plays as the motivation for throwing off the yoke of the Tarquins, we can read her symbolically as standing in for the abused dignity of the aristocracy, her alleged coupling with a slave reflective of the tyrants' attitude to the freedom of their subjects. Both in the political and the social sphere, therefore, *superbia*, as portrayed

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benigne; victor maritus comiter inuitat regios iuvenes. ibi Sex. Tarquinium mala libido Lucretiae per vim stuprandae capit; cum forma tum spectata castitas incitat).

[48] Livy 1.58.5: 'but once his desire, as if a winner, had conquered her obstinate chastity, and he, upon leaving, was fierce from breaking down her womanly dignity …' (*quo terrore cum vicisset obstinatam pudicitiam velut victrix libido, profectusque inde Tarquinius ferox expugnato decore muliebri esset*, …). On the vexed textual history of *velut victrix* see Ogilvie 1965 *ad loc.*

[49] For an extended analysis of the parallels between Tarquin's role in the siege of Ardea and Sextus Tarquin's in his attack on Lucretia, see Philippides 1983.

through the actions of the family that is most firmly connected to it, illustrates multiple threats to the maintenance of proper republican values.

5. *The transformation of* superbia

What then, can explain the unprecedented appearance of positively inflected *superbia* in Horace? It occurs in a most emphatic position, in the famous last Ode of what was intended as the last book of the Odes, *Exegi monumentum.* Horace is summing up his achievement and laying claim to immortality (Hor. *Carm.* 3.30.14–16):[50]

> take up pride
> acquired through merit and willingly with Delphic
> laurel wreathe my hair, Melpomene.

> sume superbiam
> quaesitam meritis et mihi Delphica
> lauro cinge uolens, Melpomene, comam.

The terms in which Horace addresses his Muse are reminiscent of the Aristotelian definition of proper pride: it is pride backed by objectively verifiable accomplishments, outlined in the preceding poem. Given the exclusively negative status of the quality in the tradition up to this point, this way of defining *superbia* must have had a jarring and shocking effect on its first readers, a true contradiction in terms. What the reader of this poem is witnessing is a conscious, and somewhat violent act of redefinition. The traditional negative definition is a result of construing the comparative *super-* in terms of the contrast between the internal and external, as in Isidore's gloss: claiming more than what one is from the point of view of external reality, however represented. Explicitly stating that the pride is proportionate to deserts creates a possibility for pride that is not of necessity false. In the service of creating a space for expressing pride in creative accomplishment Horace is forcefully appropriating the word as positive within a non-political, poetic context. Assigning it to the Muse rather than to himself both softens the startling quality of the claim[51] and helps pin down its application as

[50] It should be emphasized that this usage is unique in Horace's opus: all the other occurrences conform to the traditional negative semantics of *superbia.*

[51] Cf. Nisbet and Rudd 2004 *ad loc*: 'H. is modifying the presumption of his previous claims by attributing his success to the Muse'. His discussion of whether *meritis* should

limited to the arena of Melpomene's activity,[52] as does his specification of the wreath he desires as one of Delphic laurel, as opposed to the laurel crown of the Roman *triumphator*.[53] If *superbia* in the political sphere is not conceivable, then the concept must be divorced from its negative political connotations, and this is what Horace has done by placing it in a poem exclusively concerned with creative endeavor. This transposition of political terms into the poetic sphere is not limited to the use of *superbia* and triumphal language: most strikingly, Horace has also accorded himself the title of a poetic *princeps*.[54] It is thus not coincidental that his appropriation of *superbia* takes place at a historical moment in which the public acquiescence in Augustus' position as *princeps* is, in a much more subtle way, doing away with the negative associations of excessive concentration of power in the political sphere itself.

We can trace the effect of Horace's innovation as it is picked up by the next generation of Augustan poets. Both Propertius and an anonymous poet in the *corpus Tibullianum*, in explicitly poetic contexts, echo the language of Horace. Propertius, in the opening elegy of book four, asks Bacchus for a *corona* to match the one Horace requested from his Muse (Prop. 4.1.61–66):[55]

> Let Ennius wreathe his words with a rough garland:
> to me, Bacchus, extend the leaves of your ivy,
> so that Umbria, swollen by our books, takes pride in them,
> Umbria, the fatherland of Roman Callimachus!
> Whoever catches a glimpse of the citadels climbing from the valleys,
> let him value those walls because of my gift![56]
>
> Ennius hirsuta cingat sua dicta *corona*:
> mi folia ex *hedera* porrige, *Bacche*, tua,
> ut nostris *tumefacta* superbiat Vmbria libris,

be understood with *meis* or *tuis* assumes too sharp a separation between the two. Horace's accomplishment are hers as well; it is precisely the blurring between the two that is useful to him here. See also Putnam 1973, 11, Woodman 1974, 126.

52 Cf. Pöschl 1970, 260: 'sie [die Muse] ist gleichsam die Hypostase seiner Lyrik'.

53 Nisbet and Rudd 2004 *ad loc.* on the significance of *Delphica*. Cf. Putnam 1973, 12. The triumphal associations have already been prepared by the use of *deduxisse* in l. 14 (on this and other connotations of *deducere* see Pöschl 1970, 257– 259, Putnam 1973, 10–11, Woodman 1974, 124–125).

54 On Horace's association with Augustus in the third book of the odes and the political connotations of Horace's use of *princeps*, see Putnam 1973, 10–11.

55 Cf. Solmsen 1948, 106–108 for a discussion of echoes of *Carm.* 3.30 in Propertius 3.2.

56 On the meaning of *aestimo* and the function of the ablative in this line see Camps 1965, *ad loc.*

> Vmbria Romani patria Callimachi!
> scandentis quisquis cernit de uallibus arces,
> ingenio muros aestimet ille meo!

In assigning pride to his fatherland Propertius not only alludes to Horace,[57] but takes the appropriation of pride further with the addition and transformation of the strongly negative *tumefacta*, a word whose semantic cluster, as we saw in the beginning of this chapter, frequently occurs as an intensifier with the negative pride words.[58] By focusing on Umbria's claim to pride rather than his own claim to be the Roman Callimachus[59] Propertius is able to present this instance of *superbia* as justified and deserved, since his poetic stature is taken for granted. At the same time, Propertius is creating a paradox by equating the highly un-Callimachean *tumor* with his claim to be Roman Callimachus.[60] It is the addition of *Romanus* in this programmatic introduction to the new aetiological strain in Propertius' elegiac voice that transforms Callimachus in such a way that pride has to supplant the Callimachean shirking of excess.[61]

In addition to this programmatic echo, Propertius builds on the appropriation of *superbia* in the poetic realm by treating the word as potentially neutral on three occasions. A brief elegy addressed to the

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[57] The invocation of Bacchus alludes to Horace's invocation of the Muse, but the pride is transferred to the fatherland, which plays an important role in Horace's ode as well, (Hor. *Carm.* 3.30.10–12): *dicar, qua violens obstrepit Aufidus / et qua pauper aquae Daunus agrestium / regnavit populorum* … On Propertius' association of Bacchus with his new elegiac project (vs. Apollo's link with love elegy) see DeBrohun 2003, 97–102; on conflation of Umbria and Rome as Propertius' *patria*, with the expansion of *patria* paralleling the expansion of the scope of Propertius' elegy, *ibid.* 102–105.

[58] See Solmsen 1948 on Propertius' development of Horace's ideas. Cf. 1948, 107 on the technique: 'It may well be said that Propertius carried the idea of the poet's immortality a stage beyond Horace'. Hutchinson 2006 *ad* 4.63–64 sees the allusions to Horace as almost amounting to parody.

[59] Cf. Horace assigning his pride to the Muse.

[60] Cf. DeBrohun 2003, 101 on *tumefacta* as a challenge to the Callimachean ideal. See DeBrohun 2003, 1–9 for a discussion of Callimachus as a flexible character in Propertius' elegiac universe, who is being modified according to the poet's own poetic agenda. For the significance of *Callimachus Romanus* in this poem see also e.g. Stahl 1985, 260–261, more generally Hubbard 1974, 68–115. On Propertius' use of Ennius in programmatic contexts, often in opposition to Callimachus, see Miller 1983, 278–287, on this poem 285–287.

[61] Cf. DeBrohun 2003, 8: 'Book 4 is a turn to a specific type of Propertian elegiac Callimacheanism that retains its primary qualities but is simultaneously more expansive and aetiological, tending toward, at times verging on, epic grandeur'. See also *ibid.*, 68 on *Romanus Callimachus* as symbolizing a compromise between epic and love elegy; cf. Miller 1982, 383–385 on the 'markedly un-Callimachean' persona in Prop. 4.1.

mistress, who has deceived the poet, and later to his rival, brings together beauty and pride (Prop. 3.8.35–36):

> Rejoice, since there is no one equally beautiful; you would suffer,
> if there were: as it is, you have the right to be proud.
>
> gaude, quod nullast aeque formosa: doleres,
> si qua foret: nunc sis *iure* superba licet.

Cynthia is described as *iure superba*, justly proud, so that her pride is commensurate with the poet's admiration for her beauty and real power she has over him; while the phrase probably still carries some oxymoronic force, the objective element in the evaluation is reinforced by the impersonal *licet*. In a poem in which Propertius declares himself finally free from his love, her pride has become false, having lost its foundation, and she is declared *nimium superba*, too proud (Prop. 3.24.1–2):

> Your confidence in your beauty, woman, is false,
> that was once made excessively proud by my eyes.
>
> falsast ista tuae, mulier, fiducia formae,
> olim oculis nimium facta superba meis.

The basis of Cynthia's pride in this case is revealed as located not in externally verifiable reality, but in a temporary delusion of the poet. In these instances, the very need for a modifier reveals that *superbia* by itself could now be conceived of neutrally, in marked contrast to the earlier usage as well as to the majority of occurrences in Propertius' own poetry. A passage from an elegy that describes Cynthia bursting in on Propertius' merry evening and the following negotiation between the lovers for the conditions of forgiveness is particularly interesting because of Propertius' use of legal language and the contractual nature of Cynthia's assumption of pride (Prop. 4.8.81–82):

> She laid down the law: I answered 'By these laws I will abide'.
> She laughed, made proud by the power thus granted.
>
> indixit leges: respondi ego 'legibus utar'.
> riserat imperio facta superba dato.

Cynthia's pride is here constructed in part as the opposite of the abusive pride of the Tarquins: instead of a violent usurpation, there is a negotiation between the parties; laws are clearly set out and accepted by the subject, who is recognized as being in the position to grant *imperium*. The granting of *imperium* by the *comitia curiata* was believed to be another step in the legitimate process of assumption of kingly

office that Tarquin does not take.[62] Here, only once the negotiations are properly concluded, is the *puella* able to be *superba*: she is made proud by her acquiescing subject, unlike Tarquin who is given the name *Superbus* precisely because of his disregard for the law and his contempt for the rights of his people. Yet the basic negative meaning of *superbia* is not entirely absent and is brought to the fore by the context surrounding the negotiation. Thus Cynthia's reaction to the conclusion of these legalistic proceedings may be a sign of the danger that this 'monarchy' has of degenerating into tyranny. Her laughter indicates pleasure in the victory, but also her confidence that her victory was assured all along, and in that there is some contempt for the weaker party that smacks of *fastus*. Thus, despite its proper appearance at this point in the narrative, her power may be transformed into something that is not so alien to Tarquin's rule after all, as her violent assault on the narrator in lines 65–66, followed by an attack on innocent Lygdamus, also suggests.[63]

What the pattern in Propertius' usage demonstrates is that Horace, by ascribing *superbia* to his Muse, created a space for neutral or positive use of *superbia*, even though the dominant meaning, deeply ingrained for centuries, continues to be negative. In the group of poems by the unknown author of the Sulpicia cycle transmitted in the Tibullan corpus[64] we can observe a pattern similar to that found in Propertius. As the poet is appealing to the Muses, now plural, and Apollo to celebrate Sulpicia, he describes Apollo as proud of his lyre ([Tib.] 3.8 (= 4.2).21–24):

> You, Muses, praise this woman in song on this day of celebration
> And you, Phoebus, proud because of your lyre.
> She will conduct this solemn rite for many years:
> No girl is more worthy of your choir than this one.
>
> hanc uos, Pierides, festis cantate kalendis,
> et testudinea Phoebe superbe lyra.
> hoc sollemne sacrum multos haec sumet in annos:
> dignior est uestro nulla puella choro.

[62] On this belief, in evidence in the late Republic, and its possible origin in the imperfect understanding of the *lex curiata* see Lintott 1999, 28–29, with further bibliography, n. 9.

[63] For a Lacanian reading of violence in this poem, see Janan 2001, 114–127.

[64] On the issue of authorship in Book 3 of the *Corpus Tibullianum* see Tränkle 1990, 1–6, Holzberg 1999 and Hubbard 2004–2005; the date of the group of poems under discussion is most likely post-Ovidian, as evidenced by echoes of his poetry.

Given the location of the poem in the festival context of the Matronalia, the preceding evocation of Supicia's beauty, and the likely function of the poem as a Matronalia gift for her, *superbia* in this poem is properly deserved pride that, as in the case of Horace's Muse, must include Apollo's pride in the poetic accomplishment of his protégé. This impression is strengthened in the following lines that describe Sulpicia herself as supremely worthy of this poetic celebration. But the poet also talks of Apollo's pride in his long hair in a metrically identical line,[65] taking the positive interpretation of the word beyond the strictly poetic context.

6. *Conclusion: Seneca*

Following centuries of unequivocally negative status of pride as an anti-republican quality, the redefinition of *superbia*, first introduced into the mainstream of the tradition by Horace to express poetic pride in the context of the establishment of one-man rule by Augustus, and developed further by the next generation of poets, created a space for designations of pride as a positive quality in subsequent Latin literature. I would like to close this preliminary exploration of Roman pride with a brief look at *superbia* as used by Seneca the Younger, half a century later.

In the majority of instances Seneca deploys the traditional, negatively conceived *superbia*. Excessive pride of extraordinary, but very flawed characters, abounds in the tragedies. So Atreus, about to display the success of his hubristic feast to the audience, boasts (Sen. *Thyestes* 885–888):

> I stride, equal to the stars, and above all others,
> touching the high heaven with my proud head.
> Now I hold the emblems of kingship, now, the throne of my father.
> I release the gods: I have attained the highest of my wishes.
>
> aequalis astris gradior et cunctos super
> altum superbo vertice attingens polum.
> nunc decora regni teneo, nunc solium patris.
> dimitto superos: summa votorum attingi.

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[65] [Tib.] 3.10 (= 4.4).2: 'be present, Phoebus, proud of your unshorn hair' (*huc ades, intonsa Phoebe superbe coma*).

The speech is replete with conventional markers of tyrannical self-delusion to the point of parody: it ties together the presumption of superiority within the human and the divine realms with the claim to royal power and assumption of imperviousness to fate in the time to come.[66] These exorbitant claims are exemplifying what is meant by the epithet *superbo* that he applies to himself.[67] The allusions to Horace *Carm.* 1.1 (especially *sublimi feriam sidera vertice*, 36)[68] present us with an intriguing reversal: Horace, in what was meant to be the last poem of the *Odes*, has made a bid for stripping *superbia* of its negative political connotations by bringing it into the realm of poetry; Seneca's Atreus takes Horace's proud poetic claim in the first poem of the *Odes* and gives it a negative meaning both by replacing *sublimi* with *superbo* and by inserting it into a politically charged framework.[69]

A good example of the negative usage in the *Epistles* is provided by the famous letter on the issues of slavery, where it occurs three times. The custom of dining with slaves in attendance standing around the dinner table is *consuetudine superbissima* (47.2); the slave-owners, in their treatment of slaves are characterized as *superbissimi, crudelissimi, contumeliosissimi* (47.11); and when the attitude in which one ought to approach one's slaves is described as *hilaris*, the rejected one is labeled *superbe superior* (47.17). In all these instances, it is not the status gap as such that is being rejected by Seneca: *superior* can stand; it is the behavior that not only emphasizes the gap, but also treats it as greater than it actually is that Seneca criticizes (witness for instance the emphatic *immo homines* in response to the imaginary remark *servi sunt* in the beginning of the letter, which is a response to the implied demotion of slaves to object or animal status). The connection with tyranny is present here as well

[66] Cf. Tarrant 1985, *ad* 885–886 and 888. Volk 2006, 194–195 analyzes this scene as Atreus' apotheosis as a sungod.

[67] Appropriation of, and exulting in, normally negative language associated with tyranny and hybris is typical of Atreus' verbal self-presentation. Cf. e.g. Sen. *Thyestes* 117 (*tyranno*), 211–212, 214–215, 216–217 and 267–268 (*nescioquid animus maius et solito amplius/ supraque fines moris humani tumet*) with Tarrant *ad loc.* Note especially the last passage, which refers to *insolentia* (*solito amplius*) and *tumor* (*tumet*).

[68] Schiesaro 2003, 59 discusses how this allusion contributes to Atreus' role as the dramaturge of the action.

[69] The question of the play's relevance to contemporary politics is a vexed one, additionally complicated by the difficulty of assigning a date. Tarrant 1985, 48 suggests links with 'Caligula' of *de Ira* and points to a possible allusion to Nero (n. 164); Schiesaro 2003, 153–154 argues against reading contemporary allusions into the play (further bibliography n. 29); Volk 2006, 194–200 reads Atreus the sungod as an anti-Neronian allusion and goes on to argue for a 'Nero-critical reading' of the play.

(47.20): 'we put on the attitude of kings' (*regum nobis induimus animos*) is how Seneca frames the inappropriately exaggerated contempt of slaves that allows for their mistreatment.

Negative *superbia* is also in evidence in the dialogues, and especially prominent in *de Ira*, with its *exempla* of cruel and insolent behavior. The case of Volesus, proconsul of Asia under Augustus, is representative. He walks among the bodies of the men whose executions he supervised *vultu superbo*, apparently because he believes that the grand scale of three hundred men executed in one day has raised him above the common crowd. A culmination of this little tale comes when Volesus exclaims *o rem regiam* in Greek,[70] which almost seems to echo Tulllia's *regia res scelus est* in Ovid. Here again *superbia* is closely connected to cruelty and royal pretensions. The examples taken from different genres within the Senecan corpus present a coherent picture.

Alongside the negative usage, two instances of positively interpreted *superbia* are found in the letters.[71] In a letter responding to Lucilius' recent interest in Papirius Fabianus,[72] Seneca grants that the orator, whose style he finds generally praiseworthy, may be justly criticized for a failing in passion (*Ep.* 100.10):

> You might wish that something is said against vices with harshness, against dangers with spirit, against fortune with pride.
>
> desideres contra vitia aliquid aspere dici, contra pericula animose, contra fortunam superbe.

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[70] Sen. *de Ira* 2.5.5: 'Not so long ago, Volesus, a proconsul of Asia under the deified Augustus, after he executed three hundred men in one day, walking among the corpses with a proud look on his face, as if he had done something magnificent and worth admiring, exclaimed in Greek "o royal deed!" What had this king done? This was not anger, but a greater, incurable evil' (*Volesus nuper, sub diuo Augusto proconsul Asiae, cum trecentos uno die securi percussisset, incedens inter cadauera uultu superbo, quasi magnificum quiddam conspiciendumque fecisset, graece proclamauit 'o rem regiam!' quid hic rex fecisset? non fuit haec ira sed maius malum et insanabile*).

[71] In addition, an unambiguously positive take on pride is found in the [Senecan] *Hercules Oetaeus*. Hercules is consoling his mother (1508): 'stem your tears, now, my parent; you will be proud among the Argive mothers' (*parce iam lacrimis, parens: / superba matres inter Argolicas eris*). Her promised elevation will be just in proportion to her son's extraordinary accomplishments. It is difficult to read any residual negativity in this instance, and this is particularly striking in the world of tragedy, where tyrannical pride otherwise dominates: an indication of how normalized this usage has become.

[72] On Papirius Fabianus and his influence on Seneca, see Fillion-Lahille 1984, 258–259, Inwood 2005, 9–15; on Seneca's treatment of Fabianus' style in relation to the practice of philosophy in this letter, Henderson 2004, 153–156. Cf. also Seneca the Elder's invocation of *Fabianus philosophus* (*contr.* 2 pr.1) rather than *orator* with Inwood 2005, 9.

Here *fortuna* appears as the entity to which one ought to respond with pride, and Fabianus is found lacking in his inability to channel *superbia* when appropriate. In the second example, *fortuna* is once again the object that ought to be treated with *superbia* in a passage that elevates virtue as the only good (*Ep*. 76.21):

> Therefore virtue itself is the one good, which walks between extremes of fortune with pride, in great contempt of either.
>
> unum ergo bonum ipsa virtus est, quae inter hanc fortunam et illam superba incedit cum magno utriusque contemptu.

Even though the image of *virtus* walking with pride may bring to mind Volesus the proconsul proclaiming himself equal to kings *vultu superbo*, in this case the use of *superba* does not seem to contribute any negative connotations. *Virtus*, the only good, is objectively above *fortuna* and therefore should treat the latter accordingly. Contempt, which was prominent in the negative construction of pride as *fastus*, is given a positive role as well: with *fortuna* playing the part of the usually arrogant oppressor, contempt for its undeserved position and proper pride is what allows the elevation of *virtus* into the place that is fitting. In this passage, thanks to the transformation effected by Horace and the poets who followed his lead in constructing pride as a positive quality, Seneca finally extends the positive reading of pride into the Aristotelian realm of moral philosophy, though in a restricted way: pride is only permitted to the wise man in his confrontation with *Fortuna*.[73]

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CHAPTER FIFTEEN

OMNIS MALIGNITAS EST VIRTUTI CONTRARIA:[1] *MALIGNITAS* AS A TERM OF AESTHETIC EVALUATION FROM HORACE TO TACITUS' *DIALOGUS DE ORATORIBUS*

Christopher S. Van Den Berg

That man does not favor and applaud the talents of the dead
But despises ours.

Horace Epistles *2.1.88–89*

The praise of ancient authors proceeds not from the reverence of the dead, but from the competition and mutual envy of the living.

Hobbes Leviathan.

1. *Introduction: The origins of the* 'malignitas *family'*[2]

Malignitas is both more and less 'bad' than present-day lexica would suggest. This chapter will offer a partial test of that assertion by exam-

[1] A citation from Fulgentius Mythographus' (fifth or sixth century) *Mythologiae* 2.3: 'all *malignitas* is opposed to (virtuous) excellence'. The present contribution is one part of a larger study of *livor*, *malevolentia*, *malignitas*, and *obtrectatio* which developed out of research conducted at the *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae*. That research included examining a number of times the uses and contexts of the more than one thousand examples of the '*malignitas* family' from the earliest uses (Plautus) into the fifth century CE. This family includes the substantives *malignitas* and *malignatio*, the adverbs *maligne* and *maligniter*, the adjective *malignus, -a, -um*, and the verb *malignor*. I began on the basis of the articles in the *TLL* and the *OLD*, however, I have since come to believe that significant complexities in the employment and meaning of the *malignitas* family are not brought out fully in these lexica (and in the standard lexica that preceded them). In this chapter I restrict discussion as much as possible to the usage in contexts of aesthetic judgment and literary production; nonetheless it will be necessary to address in part the larger complexities of this word-group for the sake of the arguments here.

[2] I use *malignitas* in my general discussion to refer without distinction to the con-

ining the '*malignitas* family' in the vocabulary of aesthetic evaluation in approximately the first two centuries of imperial Roman literary culture. Modern emphasis of *malignitas* as something like 'envious maliciousness' has overshadowed other essential nuances. As a result the specific registers and the semantic breadth of the term's 'badness' have often been occluded by indeterminate and amorphous renderings such as 'malignity', 'maliciousness', 'envy', 'spite', etc., blanket terms often too forceful in comparison with the Latin. In light of this inattention to meaningful nuances on the one hand, and of overburdened renderings on the other, comes my assertion that *malignitas* is both more and less 'bad' than has often been acknowledged.[3]

Malignitas in the earliest usage essentially conveys an idea of deficiency or failure. A compound of 'bad'/'badly' (*malus/male*) and the verbal root 'to bring forth' (*gignere*), its etymology suggests that which bears or produces poorly. This sense comes to light vividly in connection with the fruits of the natural world. Columella (3.10.18) states 'we've witnessed from time to time even carefully tested seeds degenerate because of some natural failure (*malignitate*)' (*compertum habemus naturali quadam malignitate desciscere interdum quamvis diligenter probata semina*).[4] *Malignitas* also denotes the physical features of natural objects that are limited in some manner, as in Vergil's description at *Aeneid* 11.522–525:

> there is a valley with a curving recess, perfect for tricks
> and armed ambushes, which slopes on each side hem in,
> dark with thick undergrowth, where a tiny path leads
> and tight openings and narrow (*maligni*) approaches bring you there.

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cepts, attitudes, and actions designated or described by *malignitas*; *malignus, -a, -um*; and *maligne*. Claims made about *malignitas* apply equally to all terms included in it. *Malignatio*, *malignor*, and *maligniter* are not included in the designation *malignitas*. I have excluded these forms because *malignor*, in what Latin remains to us, is largely a later development among Christian writers and mostly concerns them in a way that is not relevant to the present concerns. The same can be said for *malignatio* and *maligniter*, which also are exceedingly rare.

[3] There are in fact a few rather positive uses, but discussion of those examples would exceed the scope of the present chapter. But consider Vergil *Aeneid* 5.654–656, which seems to give *malignus* a sympathetic coloring: 'yet the women uncertain at first and undecided / looked at the boats with grudging (*malignis*) eyes between pitiful affection / for their current homeland and for the lands beckoning by destiny' (*at matres primo ancipites oculisque malignis / ambiguae spectare rates miserum inter amorem / praesentis terrae fatisque vocantia regna*).

[4] Unless otherwise specified all translations are my own.

est curvo anfractu valles, adcommoda fraudi
armorumque dolis, quam densis frondibus atrum
urget utrimque latus, tenuis quo semita ducit
angustaeque ferunt fauces aditusque maligni.

Such limitations of nature affect humans too. Demosthenes waged a protracted struggle with a weak voice (Valerius Maximus 8.7.ext. 1): 'he fought with nature and, what's more, was victorious, having overcome its insufficient gift (*malignitatem*) by the tenacious force of his will' (*proeliatus est cum Rerum Natura et quidem victor abiit malignitatem eius pertinacissimo animi robore superando*).

Underlying the employment of *malignitas* in these examples is a relatively straightforward act of perception. A speaker perceives a deficiency in an object or individual and then designates that deficiency with *malignitas*. In such cases some aspect of the material world fails to provide as much as it *could* have: nature's bounty grows less plentiful (*naturali quadam malignitate*); narrow entrances offer insufficient space to pass through them (*aditus maligni*); a speaker lacks the requisite natural talent and struggles to overcome this deficiency (*malignitatem* in the case of Demosthenes). This 'badness' is essentially one of failure, but failure without a distinct ethical coloring. Products or features of nature cannot meet the demands placed upon them, but their insufficiency does not somehow engage our sense of moral indignation. Indeed, Seneca calmly admonishes complaints about nature's stinginess when it withholds comprehension of its mysteries (*de Beneficiis* 7.1.5–6):[5]

> Truth is all wrapped up and stuck away in some deep recess. Yet we cannot complain about nature's stinginess (*malignitate*), since no discovery is difficult except one in which the advantage is simply having made the discovery.
>
> involuta veritas in alto latet. nec de malignitate naturae queri possumus, quia nullius rei difficilis inventio est, nisi cuius hic unus inventae fructus est invenisse.

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[5] According to Seneca humans do complain about the brevity of life, which he deems the *malignitas naturae* (*Dialogues* 10.1.1): 'the greater part of mortals, Paulinus, complain of the stinginess (*malignitate*) of nature, the fact that we are born into such a short span of life' (*maior pars mortalium, Pauline, de naturae malignitate conqueritur, quod in exiguum aevi gignamur*). Some translators have misunderstood Seneca's use here. *Malignitas* refers to Nature's stinginess in only providing a short lifetime to mortals (as explained by the *quod*-clause). It does not designate Nature's spitefulness or malevolence (Basore 1990 translates as 'spitefulness' and Fink 1992 as 'Mißgunst'). For a similar usage see Pliny *Naturalis Historia* 7.167.

Compare with this the uses in Roman comedy of *malignitas* applied to human actions or dispositions.[6] In such cases it means the refusal or disinclination to give: 'stinginess' or 'meanness'. The moral emphasis changes as well; it is no longer a question of providing as much as *could* be the case, but rather as much as *should* be the case. Human *malignitas* is measured against a practical or ethical standard (either implied or real) which an individual has failed to meet. The speaker in such contexts provides both a perception on what is or could be given as well as a subsidiary judgment with a social significance. The cases of 'stinginess' that we find in Plautus represent the most basic application of this additional standard.

Terence expands on Plautus' general focus on pecuniary matters. Parmeno describes Bacchis' changed disposition towards her former lover Pamphilus, who has taken Philumena as a wife (*Hecyra* 157–160):

> PHILOTIS: What happened in the meantime? Did he [*sc.* Pamphilus] still visit Bacchis?
> PARMENO: Daily.
> But as happens, once she saw that he was no longer attached to her,
> she immediately became far more grudging [*maligna*] and demanding.
> PHILOTIS: By heaven that's no wonder.

> PHILOTIS: quid interea? ibatne ad Bacchidem?
> PARMENO: cotidie.
> sed ut fit, postquam hunc alienum ab sese videt,
> maligna multo et magis procax facta ilicost.
> PHILOTIS: non edepol mirum.

The attitude (*maligna et procax*) that Parmeno describes to Bacchis' fellow *meretrix* reflects, according to the extant evidence, a nascent shift in the semantic development of *malignitas*. Bacchis is 'less giving' not in a strictly pecuniary sense, but in the trafficking of sexual affections between courtesan and lover.[7] Her reaction seems quite natural to Parmeno and Philotis. In Roman Comedy *malignitas* is a somewhat anodyne—albeit still negative—term of description, more relevant to individual interaction than to prominent public situations. The negative judgment that accompanies it, though always visible, lacks the same prominence or force found in more socially charged uses of *malignitas*.

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[6] Plautus *Captivi* 465 (*malignitas*); *Stichus* 590 (*maligne*); *Bacchides* 401 (*malignus*); *Epidicus* 709 (*malignus*, but the text is uncertain); Terence *Hecyra* 159 (*maligna*). Most tellingly, *malignus* is opposed to *largus* at *Bacchides* 401 in a list of good and bad qualities.

[7] Authors frequently apply *procax* to *meretrices* (and *lenones*), cf. *TLL* 10.2.1492.32–48 (Wild, 1998). Donatus paraphrases *maligna* as *difficilis*.

In its subsequent development, when applied to the sphere of acutely visible public interaction, *malignitas* gains in complexity and scope.[8] Individuals still employ it to describe failed acts of giving or reciprocity. However in such exchanges one gives not only tangible objects such as money or the spoils of war, but also intangible forms of social recognition such as praise or specific honors. An author's employment of *malignitas* in these contexts sets into motion a process of 'social accounting', of assessing, judging, and ultimately regulating interactions and exchanges between individuals or groups. The term also develops semantic richness, when a range of human judgments are superimposed upon human perception in order to make forceful claims not only about how the world is, but about how individuals should conduct themselves in it (section 2).

This chapter explores one aspect of that expected conduct: to evaluate literary creation and to assert aesthetic principles in (roughly) the first two centuries of the Roman Empire (sections 3–6). *Malignitas* is a key element in the vocabulary of imperial Roman performance culture. Through it individuals touted their achievements and defended specific embodiments—poetry, prose, or rhetoric—of cultural production. The term reflected the Roman impulse to defend one's public face, that is, one's credibility, reputation, and legitimacy as a spectacle for others to consume and to judge.[9]

How did *malignitas* come to be employed to this end and what relation exists between it and 'malice', 'spite', or 'envy', the English terms

[8] For a similar, but far more extensive, treatment of the simultaneous development of aesthetic and social terminology around the end of the Republic, see the excellent study of the 'language of social performance' in Krostenko 2001. Though illuminating for some aspects of the approach taken here, Krostenko's work more broadly addresses how a key set of lexemes represents 'a large-scale attempt to create a new cultural category in which certain kinds of aestheticism could be understood as the complement of social worth' (Krostenko 2001, 15). The present chapter focuses on the development of *malignitas* beginning in the early Empire, with aims that are historically and categorically different from Krostenko's. A key difference lies in the present chapter's elementary objective: to demonstrate that *malignitas* was, among other things, in fact a recognizable term—to the Roman mind at least—of what we would now call literary criticism. Krostenko analyzes 'approbative vocabulary', whereas *malignitas* could more appropriately be classified as an example of '(dis)approbative meta-vocabulary'. In aesthetic contexts *malignitas* does not offer literary judgments directly, but rather it evaluates literary judgment itself.

[9] Lendon 1997 presents an engaging study of Roman honor; in particular Lendon 1997, 30–73 on aristocratic honor and Lendon 1997, 272–279 on honor terminology in both Greek and Latin.

often used to translate it in the contexts under discussion here? These questions are fundamental not only to an understanding of *malignitas*, but also to the specific issues of this volume. I will outline central features of the 'badness' that *malignitas* denotes and the specific contexts in which it emerges. Put otherwise, what does *malignitas* designate, what are a speaker's aims in employing it, and to what or to whom does one attribute it?

2. *The development of* malignitas *in contexts of social reward*

The trajectory of *malignitas* in contexts of social recognition and reward is complex and to understand it we may turn to Livy. As in comedy, *malignitas* in Livy can designate the withholding of monetary or tangible goods.[10] In the famous account of the capture of Veii, for example, Marcus Furius Camillus considers how to distribute the spoils of war (5.20.1–3):

> Once the general saw victory in his hands and that an exceedingly rich city was being captured and that there would be more booty than in all previous wars together, he sent a letter to the senate, in order not to arouse either the soldiers' anger by being stingy (*ex malignitate*) in distributing spoils or indignation among the fathers by an excessive generosity: by divine providence, his own designs, and the soldiers' endurance, the Veii would soon be under the power of the Roman people; what in their opinion should be done with the booty?
>
> dictator cum iam in manibus videret victoriam esse, urbem opulentissimam capi tantumque praedae fore, quantum non omnibus in unum conlatis ante bellis fuisset, ne quam inde aut militum iram ex malignitate praedae partitae aut invidiam apud patres ex prodiga largitione caperet, litteras ad senatum misit: deum inmortalium benignitate, suis consiliis, patientia militum Veios iam fore in potestate populi Romani; quid de praeda faciendum censerent?

Camillus faces a predicament. Measuring his more immediate obligation to distribute booty to deserving soldiers against the more remote demands of the state as embodied by the senate, he anticipates the possible negative reactions of both parties. Livy carefully structures the sentence so as to weigh each group's emotional reaction against the distribution of war spoils: *malignitas* will produce *ira* in the soldiers, while

[10] Cf. Livy 2.42.1; 5.22.1; 8.12.11; 10.46.14; 34.34.7; 39.9.6; 45.35.9.

largitio will awaken *invidia* in the senators (and, we later learn, in that portion of the *plebs Romana* that was not at Veii).[11]

The passage pointedly highlights the importance of *malignitas* for defining social standards.[12] At issue is a judgment about how the allocation of physical goods functions in accordance with the expectations of a community. A number of different individuals or groups may build the standpoint from which to judge whether something can be called *malignitas*, in this case, the narrator, the *dictator*, the soldiers as recipients of these goods, or the senators and *plebs* still at Rome (who more likely will perceive *prodiga largitio* than *malignitas*).

Livy 3.63.5 documents senatorial *malignitas*, but with a notable difference. He applies the term not to the distribution of physical objects but to formal honors in celebration of military success. After two victories in 449, first against the Aequi and the Volsci, and then against the Sabines, the senate decreed one day of thanksgiving:

> For the two victories obtained in two places and two battles, the senate stingily (*maligne*) decreed one day of thanksgiving in the name of the consuls. Unbeckoned the people went *en masse* even on the second day; this improvised thanksgiving, coming from the people, was almost more heavily celebrated in their zeal.
>
> gemina victoria duobus bifariam proeliis parta maligne senatus in unum diem supplicationes consulum nomine decrevit. populus iniussu et altero die frequens iit supplicatum; et haec vaga popularisque supplicatio studiis prope celebratior fuit.

The two-for-one *supplicatio* amounts to a failed social transaction, in which the allotted *supplicatio* insufficiently honored the deeds it was supposed to commemorate.[13] Livy applies the basic sense of material cheapness to the domain of communal recognition. His language emphasizes the meticulous accounting in the transaction, as the pleo-

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[11] Cf. Kaster 2005, 84–103 for a discussion of *invidia*. The meaning here likely contains a sense of 'rightful indignation', of the belief that Camillus would act unjustly in giving too generously to the soldiers (*ex prodiga largitione*).

[12] The entire narrative of Veii is as complicated as it is famous. For a discussion of many of its intricacies, see Ogilvie 1965 *ad loc.* and Miles 1995, 82–83. On Livy's fifth book see also Kraus 1994 (discussing the interrelation of narrative structure and spatio-temporal organization) and Levene 1993, 175–203 (focusing on religious themes).

[13] On *supplicationes* see Halkin 1953, Freyburger 1977 and 1978. Halkin 1953 most comprehensively studies the *supplicatio*, emphasizing its connection to military success and its role as a prerequisite to the triumph. Freyburger 1977 usefully details the linguistic and religious aspects.

nastic 'doubles' (*gemina*, *duobus*, *bifariam*, *consulum*) contrast with the lone day of supplication (*unum diem*), key rhetorical cues that guide a reader's sympathies.

The religious context is also essential in order to understand the term's meaning here. The senate's attitude towards the victorious generals could on its own be thought of as 'malicious', the malevolence of senators jealously thwarting recognition for the consuls. But *supplicationes* are foremost a tribute to the gods, and 'maliciousness' or 'envy' towards the gods cannot be imputed to the senate's actions. Rather, Livy patently condemns its 'stinginess'.

Beyond condemnation Livy's account also regulates and rectifies an act of *malignitas*. The narrative balances, so to speak, the communal books. That 'corrective function' takes place in the reaction of the people, and indeed seems to be the narrative's main purpose, for he does not even bother to describe the first day's *supplicatio*.[14] Equally telling is the people's reaction. The spontaneous gathering on the second day (*iniussu*, *vaga supplicatio*) suggests how foreign *malignitas* was to Roman sensibilities, as if the people's social reflexes spurred them to rectify a perceived injustice.[15]

A final example will underscore what I have designated the 'corrective function' of *malignitas*. In Book 38 Livy relates the senate's hesitation to decree a triumph for Gnaeus Manlius (Livy 38.50.2–3):

> At the end of the session it seemed that the senate would decide to deny the triumph. On the next day both the relatives and friends of Gnaeus Manlius used all of their resources and the influence of the elders won out, who said that no example was recorded of a general who had been victorious in battle, completed his mission, and brought back his army, only to reenter Rome without a victory chariot and laurels as a private

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[14] It is hard to know to what extent these *supplicationes* may be a fabrication of Livy's. Ogilvie 1965, 513 remarks: 'the thanksgiving for victories was a comparatively late development. The present case has several suspicious features'. Foremost among these is the *vaga popularisque supplicatio*, which he regards as 'a clumsy annalistic explanation'. Discussing events that took place in 396 BCE, Ogilvie 1965, 679 notes: 'It is doubtful whether *supplicationes* after victory had yet been devised'. But Livy's historical inaccuracy could only reinforce my point here. In relating the *supplicationes* (if his alleged anachronism was intentional or if this was a fabrication outright), and especially in relating the second spontaneous *supplicatio*, the narrative stresses the proper functioning of communal recognition. *Malignitas* is the key to understanding the potential failure of that process.

[15] Furthermore, this would help to explain the rhetorical force of the comparative *celebratior*: as if in their laudable fervor to settle accounts the people nearly overcompensated.

man and unhonored. Hereupon their sense of shame overcame their stinginess (*malignitatem*) and they voted a triumph in great number.

dimittitur senatus in ea opinione ut negaturus triumphum fuisse videretur. postero die et cognati amicique Cn. Manli summis opibus adnisi sunt, et auctoritas seniorum valuit, negantium exemplum proditum memoriae esse ut imperator, qui devictis perduellibus, confecta provincia exercitum reportasset, sine curru et laurea privatus inhonoratusque urbem iniret. hic pudor malignitatem vicit, triumphumque frequentes decreverunt.

Livy again applies *malignitas* to an act of communal recognition. When the senate hesitates to award a triumph, concerted shaming by those close to Gnaeus Manlius backed up by the power of precedent spurs the senators to concede: their sense of propriety overcame their refusal to award social capital. *Malignitas* again comes to underscore the unjustified and unjustifiable refusal to accord recognition.[16] Both accounts fulfill an exemplary function. They not only recount some detail of the Roman past but also demonstrate a Roman value, or in this case an 'anti-value', and work to instill in the audience both the principle that underlies it and the communicative codes that express it. In this manner a concept such as *malignitas* finds its way into the corpus of principles and judgments that shaped Roman *mores* and consequently an individual's ethical and social sensibilities.[17]

But how does this process work in these two cases? In the first instance the spontaneity of the people's reaction rectifies a perceived injustice. Communal action takes over when individual action has failed. In the second case, once the senators' *malignitas* was exposed, that is,

[16] I emphasize the point in part because the idea of 'stinginess' has often only been recognized when involving tangible goods. But the meaning extends, with important semantic consequences, into transactions that involve social capital and into situations demanding reciprocity, such as recognition in the form of *gratia* or the failure of gods to give in return for *vota* made to them. In precisely these cases *malignitas* has frequently been interpreted as malice, envy, spite, *vel sim.* As a result an emotion or attitude of maliciousness has been imposed by modern interpreters and the 'transactional context' obscured.

[17] I am not suggesting that Livy's accounts are *exempla* in the strictest sense, which typically involve the acts surrounding a famous individual (or group) from the Roman past recounted within a recognizable narrative tradition. I would, however, like to underscore the similarities of this narrative to a key feature of *exempla* as discussed in Roller 2004: 'An action held to be consequential for the Roman community at large, and admitting of ethical categorization—that is, regarded as embodying (or conspicuously failing to embody) crucial social values'. For a discussion of *exempla* in Livy see Chaplin 2000 and (the cited essay by) Roller 2004.

upon realizing that they were committing an act of *malignitas*, their own sense of propriety (*pudor*) kicked in to correct that failure. Here the problem is resolved in the proper functioning of the senators' own sense of moral and social equity, the wish not to be or not to be seen to be *malignus*.[18]

I have introduced the two preceding passages for an additional reason: *malignitas* has often been rendered in both cases as something like 'maliciousness' or 'spitefulness'.[19] Such interpretations, I believe, miss what is at stake here and invite some general observations about the employment and meaning of *malignitas*. In the early Empire, the basic sense of 'failure' or 'insufficiency' develops significantly. The term typically occurs in circumscribed contexts that at the broadest level follow the same pattern: a speaker claims that an action or exchange, in the form of words or deeds, has failed to meet a standard. The gap between action and standard is designated as *malignitas*. The broader context: (1) highlights the failure of social obligations that this standard requires, and (2) in many cases, implies or explicitly details how to rectify that failure, what I have termed the 'corrective function' in the examples from Livy.

In particular the second element crucially defines the term's employment, allowing *malignitas* a role as a mechanism of social regulation. In describing not only who gets what, but also how much should ideally have been given, the term acquired relevance in various scenarios of exchange. The explicit or implicit rectification also crucially distinguishes *malignitas* from neighboring concepts, such as *invidia*, *livor*, or *malevolentia*.

Furthermore, the semantic and narrative relevance of *malignitas* cannot be reduced to emotions or attitudes such as envy, spite, or malice, although it frequently occurs in conjunction with precisely these kinds

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[18] On the term *pudor* and its connection to seeing oneself being seen (disapprovingly) by others, cf. Kaster 2005, 28–65.

[19] In recent French and German translations we find the following at 3.63.5: Hillen 1987 'beschloß der Senat böswillig nur für einen Tag ein Dankfest im Namen der Konsuln'. Baillet 1954 'le senat, mal disposé, ne décréta qu'un seul jour d'actions de grâces au nom des consuls'. At Livy 38.50, Hillen 1982 translates 'Scham davor besiegte die Boshaftigkeit, und sie beschlossen in großer Zahl den Triumph'. Adam 1982 translates 'Ce respect des traditions vainquit la méchanceté, et un Sénat nombreux vota le triomphe'. *TLL* 7.181.24–28 (Hey 1936) rightly places these uses in the category that includes the ideas of 'cheapness' or 'grudgingness'. However, the *TLL*'s definition is so broad that nearly any use of *malignitas* could be placed under it.

of jealous or 'rivalrous' motivations.[20] Modern definitions have often failed to capture what, precisely, made *malignitas* condemnable, that is, how this form of badness was conceived in the Roman mind and the precise contexts in which a Roman would have expressed it. To be sure, *malignitas* was listed among Rome's vices. Seneca compares it to other diseases of the mind (*morbi animorum*) (*Epistles* 106.6): 'wickedness and all of its appearances: niggardliness (*malignitas*), envy, haughtiness' (*malitia et species eius omnes, malignitas, invidia, superbia*).[21] However, a modern tendency to generalize *malignitas*' meanings has obscured the precise scope, contexts, and relevance of its badness. With these considerations in mind, the remainder of this chapter will address *malignitas* in the context of imperial cultural production, that is, as a way of regulating judgments and ascribing value in discussions of literature into the second century CE.[22]

3. Malignitas *and Literary Rivalry*

In the context of rivalries and disputes involving literary production, *malignitas* denotes an attitude or tendency in which one incorrectly or unjustly judges or comments on another's works.[23] It is (one notes the

[20] One of the initial impulses of this study was the desire to understand the differences between *malignitas* and similar terms, such as *livor, malevolentia, obtrectatio*, and especially *invidia*. I sought to formulate the 'script' that *malignitas* invokes in the context of an 'emotional economy', as Kaster 2005 has done for *invidia*. However, examination of the various contexts led to the conclusion that *malignitas* possesses in the earliest usage at best a tenuous semantic connection to any idea of envy, spite, or malice. Rather, *malignitas* and its 'script' repeatedly follow a scheme of '(social) failure (in need of rectification)'. Again, a full exposition of the various patterns in the scheme would exceed the scope of this chapter.

[21] For a discussion of *malitia* and *superbia*, see the chapters in this volume by Fantham and Baraz respectively.

[22] I have chosen examples through roughly the middle of the second century CE, because, as I argue elsewhere, there seems to be significant semantic shifts in *malignitas* at about that time.

[23] The term 'literary' may demand some specificity. *Malignitas*, as I will discuss it henceforth, occurs in discussions of poetry, prose writings, and oratory. The latter practice need not leave written traces, and therefore is not strictly speaking 'literature'. But for the purposes here I count both oratory and the rhetorical tradition more generally among Rome's literature. In discussing *malignitas*' use in 'literary production' I mean those contexts in which Roman authors specifically employ *malignitas* to address the value and recognition of writings or rhetorical output. As mentioned above, *malignitas* functions not strictly as an evaluative term, but as part of Latin's 'meta-vocabulary'

similarities to the examples from Livy) the denial of social recognition in the form of *laus*, *fama*, or *gloria*, and roughly covers 'lack of appreciation', 'stinginess in praise', 'captiousness', or 'disparagement'.[24] While terms expressing envy, such as *invidia* and *livor*, are frequently motivating factors, *malignitas* designates and condemns the failure to recognize literary achievement in adequate measure.

It is instructive to point out *malignitas*' similarities to and differences from the Latin term *obtrectatio*.[25] *Malignitas* typically fulfills a defensive or preemptive role: 'X says that he has been (or may in the future be) insufficiently appreciated by Y'. Here the speaker proposes that the appropriate recognition of and respect for his abilities or achievements has not been made (and X often proposes Y's envy or inferiority as the cause). *Obtrectatio* fulfills a more offensive function, to describe an attack on another's renown. *Malignitas* and *obtrectatio* largely differ in what may be called their offensive and defensive components. Whereas *malignitas* commonly designates someone else's refusal to accord sufficient recognition, *obtrectatio* most frequently denotes attacking someone who has already attained renown.[26]

Thus, both *obtrectatio* and *malignitas* denote acts that take aim at someone else's position on the social ladder, but they operate in different directions. *Obtrectatio* seeks to bring someone down a notch; *malignitas* refuses to raise him up. The similarities and differences outlined here may well explain a peculiarity of usage in connection with two terms

through which an individual could discuss aesthetic judgment and the bestowal of social worth in talk about literature.

[24] Wallace-Hadrill 1982, 47 n. 109 discusses the connection of *superbia* to *malignitas* and the emperor's refusal to acknowledge the achievement of potential rivals: '…*malignitas*, unwillingness to reward merit, goes with imperial *superbia*'.

[25] *OLD s.v. obtrectatio* defines it as: 'An attitude or verbal attack inspired by envy, malice, detraction, disparagement'. Cf. *TLL* 9.2.292–293 (Heine 1971). The primary definition is *i. q. actus obtrectandi sc. invidiam faciendi, detrahendi sim.*

[26] Hence the frequent association of *obtrectatio* with *aemulatio*. In the *Tusculan Disputations* Cicero distinguishes between 'bad' *aemulatio* (meaning 'jealousy' rather than the 'good' *aemulatio*, 'imitation') and *obtrectatio* (4.17): 'jealous emulation (*aemulatio*) is the distress that arises, when someone else acquires that which one desires and does not have. However *obtrectatio* … is the distress resulting from the fact that someone else also acquires that which one has desired' (*est aemulatio aegritudo si eo quod concupierit, alius potiatur, ipse careat. obtrectatio autem est … aegritudo ex eo, quod alter quoque potiatur eo quod ipse concupierit*). Cic. *Tusc.* 4.46 and 56 distinguish the terms and state that *obtrectatio* is a kind of rivalry with someone else who acquires the same good that one also has. Most frequently one employs *obtrectatio* to attack an intangible social good that someone else possesses such as renown (*laus, gloria*) or excellence (*virtus*). On Cicero's terminology in the *Tusculan Disputations*, see Graver 2002, 146, 166–167, and 171.

denoting envy, *invidia* and *livor*. Either of the substantives *obtrectatio* or *malignitas* is paired with *invidia* or *livor*, yet the substantives *obtrectatio* and *malignitas* never form a doublet.[27] I am partly suggesting, by way of negative proof, that, if *malignitas* were essentially equivalent to *invidia* and *livor*, then one might expect to see it combined with *obtrectatio* in the same manner as *invidia* and *livor*.

In turning to the examples of *malignitas* in literary production, I will outline the usage through the early second century CE (sections 4 and 5). The chapter concludes by considering the importance of *malignitas* in Tacitus' *Dialogus de Oratoribus*, and in turn how that work emphasizes key aspects of the term in imperial literary culture (section 6).

4. Malignitas *and aesthetic evaluation*

Lavishing praise on the literary accomplishments of Pompeius Saturninus, Pliny writes to his friend Erucius (*Epistles* 1.16). Saturninus' poetry is compared to the works of Calvus and Catullus, his letters read as if Plautus and Terence were writing in prose and his history possesses all the stylistic virtues that one could demand. His speeches, we are told, rival those of the ancients (1.16.3): 'You'll feel as I do once you've got his speeches in your hands, how you'd easily compare them to any of those of the ancients whom he emulates' (*senties quod ego, cum orationes eius in manus sumpseris, quas facile cuilibet veterum, quorum est aemulus, comparabis*). Pliny finishes by exhorting Erucius to admire Saturninus in the same fashion (1.16.8–9):

> I urge and advise you to do the same. The fact that he's alive shouldn't stand in the way of his achievements. If he lived among those whom we've never seen, wouldn't we search out not only his books but even his likenesses, should honor and regard for a man here now grow weary as if we've had too much of him? You know, it's erroneous and a lack of appreciation (*malignum*) not to honor a man most worthy of admiration, just because we can see, speak to, hear, embrace and demonstrate not only praise but even affection for him.
>
> quod te quoque ut facias et hortor et moneo; neque enim debet operibus eius obesse quod vivit. an si inter eos quos numquam vidimus floruisset, non solum libros eius verum etiam imagines conquireremus, eiusdem nunc honor praesentis et gratia quasi satietate languescit? at hoc

[27] Cf. *TLL* 8.181–182 (Hey 1936) and 9.2.292 (Heine 1971). However, see p. 417f. below on Phaedrus 4 pr. 15–20.

> pravum malignumque est, non admirari hominem admiratione dignissimum, quia videre alloqui audire complecti, nec laudare tantum verum etiam amare contingit.

Though lauding Saturninus without reservation, Pliny indulges in more than mere fulsome praise for his comrade in letters. The missive contains a healthy dose of self-fashioning and a statement of literary principles.[28] Pliny's avowed connection to Saturninus as both friend and literary model reflects his own leanings and ambitions.[29] The laudable qualities of Saturninus' language, for example, reflect Pliny's own preferences. By elaborating them in detail and pointing out Saturninus' epistolary virtues Pliny suggests that his own letters warrant similar praise. And if Saturninus can equal ancient orators, then by implication so too can Pliny.[30] Pliny's rivalry with Cicero is made clear enough in the famous declaration in *Epistles* 1.5.11–12: 'I responded [to Regulus] that I now understood him to have spoken disparagingly (*maligne*) since he admitted it, but it could have been regarded as an honor; you see I compete with Cicero' (*respondi nunc me intellegere maligne dictum quia ipse confiteretur, ceterum potuisse honorificum existimari. est enim … mihi cum Cicerone aemulatio*).[31] Yet there is an unrecognized subtlety in Pliny's letter to Erucius, for unlike many claims to fame, in which authors unabashedly tout their skills while decrying *malignitas*, Pliny masks that audacity through the use of implication.[32] Praise for Saturninus goes hand in hand with Pliny's attempt to connect himself to Saturninus. And when Pliny states that it is *malignum* not to recognize Saturninus' merits, the logical impli-

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[28] For a discussion of Pliny's stylistic theories and his self-modeling on a Ciceronian last, see Gamberini 1983, Shelton 1987, Bell 1989, 460, Leach 1990, Bartsch 1994, 167ff., Riggsby 1995 and 1998, Roller 1998, Hoffer 1999, 5–8. Any discussion of self-fashioning owes a debt to Greenblatt 1980.

[29] In Book 1 Pliny stresses his connection to a number of distinguished Romans and continues the practice throughout his letters. He was eager to underscore his association with literary notables, as, for example, in his efforts to form a connection to Tacitus and his repeated suggestion that others associated the two. Thus, in 7.20, to Tacitus, Pliny remarks that both are mentioned together in discussions of literature. And in 9.23, to Maximus, he retells a story first told to him by Tacitus (so says Pliny) of an *eques Romanus* who guessed that his interlocutor, known for his writings, was either Tacitus or Pliny.

[30] Pliny's verbal imitation of Cicero *de Oratore* 1.31 in section 2 of this letter is well placed between his comments on style and his claim that Saturninus rivals the ancients, among whom Cicero took the place of pride. Cf. Sherwin-White 1966, 123.

[31] Cf. Plin. *Ep.* 1.2.4 and 9.26.8.

[32] Cf. the examples from Phaedrus and Martial below in the discussion of *malignitas* in literary posturing.

cations are not hard to follow: only *malignitas* stands in the way of Pliny's own renown.

The letter may seem on this reading like self-flattery that has got out of hand, and at times it is hard not to take that impression away from Pliny's writings. But such attitudes are part and parcel of Roman public life more generally and of Roman literary culture in particular. The acquisition of *laus* was an active process sought out in the *recitatio* and in the circulation of one's works.[33] The rules of the game called for an individual not only to seek renown but also to claim his acquisition of fame publicly. That it should take on the form of (implied) self-adulation should surprise us no more than some of its less subtle versions, such as (ostensibly) exclusive elitism (Horace) or the threat of sexual violence (Catullus).[34]

Pliny's letter possesses an additional virtue, for it encapsulates a group of considerations that tend to collect around the aesthetic uses of *malignitas*. In judging another's (or asserting one's own) literary achievement, any one of three common scenarios may arise: (1) unfair judgment, that is, inadequate assessment of the literary accomplishments of others; (2) literary posturing, frequently employed as a defensive technique to ward off criticism, but typically resulting in a programmatic assertion of one's own principles and aspirations; (3) a way to understand and to connect oneself to literary forerunners, in particular the place that one assumes or hopes to assume in a poetic or rhetorical tradition. These will be taken in turn.

Authors took caution when criticizing others. The immediate aim was to avoid an accusation of *malignitas*. Horace's *Epistle to Augustus*, a survey of Roman literature and literary history, criticizes the unruliness and sensationalist tastes of the modern theater-goer. But Horace carefully tempers his criticisms (*Epistles* 2.1.208–213):

> Don't, by chance, think I'm ungenerously (*maligne*) praising what
> I'd refuse to do myself when others handle them well.

[33] On *recitatio* see Dupont 1997. Lendon 1997, 38 notes the central importance of receiving aclaim for the activities of 'high culture', including rhetoric, poetry, and philosophy. Lendon 1997, 37 underlines the necessarily public aspect of honor: 'Honour was mediated through the perceptions of others, and even a superfluity of worthy qualities was of no use unless these qualities were publicly known, and approved by other aristocrats'.

[34] As in Horace's famous spurning of the *profanum vulgus* at *Carmina* 3.1: *odi profanum vulgus et arceo*. For Catullus' sexual threats to defend both poem and literary principle, cf. *Carmina* 15 and 16.

> *My* poet seems to me to walk along a tightrope,
> who with his tricks fills my heart with terror,
> works it up, softens it, fills it with imaginary terrors,
> like a magician who sets me now in Thebes now in Athens.
>
> ac ne forte putes me, quae facere ipse recusem,
> cum recte tractent alii, laudare maligne,
> ille per extentum funem mihi posse videtur
> ire poeta meum qui pectus inaniter angit,
> inritat, mulcet, falsis terroribus implet,
> ut magus, et modo me Thebis, modo ponit Athenis.

Horace preempts accusations of *malignitas* by naming the sort of show and effects that he does prefer. A curmudgeonly list of dislikes without a statement of preferences could result in the sort of criticism that Martial makes at 5.28–29: 'perhaps you might think a man captious (*malignum*) / whom no one pleases; I'd call him a wretch' (*hominem malignum forsan esse tu credas: / ego esse miserum credo, cui placet nemo*). Quintilian too carefully tempers his suggestion that Cicero would not have become a *perfectus orator*, even had the political conditions of the Republic been more favorable to his rhetorical development (12.1.20): 'I would think (not ungenerously [*maligne*]) the greatest heights lacking in Cicero, and to which no one has come closer' (*non maligne crediderim defuisse ei summam illam, ad quam nemo propius accessit*).

Malignitas was also a way to conceive of appropriate limits when passing judgment (*iudicium*) on another's work. As a negative term it establishes a boundary separating too little praise from sufficient praise. Pliny's letter to Saturninus (9.38) on the work of their friend Rufus shows his careful weighing of criticism and praise:

> I do praise our friend Rufus, not because you have asked me to, but because he is most worthy of it. I read his book (perfect on every account), to which affection for the man added a great deal of my own personal enjoyment. But I judged it critically neverthless; you see, people who read unappreciatively (*maligne*) aren't the only ones who judge.
>
> ego vero Rufum nostrum laudo, non quia tu, ut ita facerem, petisti, sed quia est ille dignissimus. legi enim librum omnibus numeris absolutum, cui multum apud me gratiae amor ipsius adiecit. iudicavi tamen; neque enim soli iudicant, qui maligne legunt.[35]

[35] Pliny defends his 'fair' reading of Rufus' work, but *maligne* may be in part a ruse to distract from the fact that, despite the claim to judge critically, he abstains from concrete criticisms.

Quintilian advises a balance between praise and criticism for a teacher evaluating pupils' speeches (2.2.6): 'he should be neither mean (*malignus*) nor profligate in praising the speeches of his students, one makes a student's work a burden, the other makes him complacent' (*in laudandis discipulorum dictionibus nec malignus nec effusus, quia res altera taedium laboris, altera securitatem parit*). The opposition of *malignus* to *effusus* sets the outer limits in assessing a speech and posits a happy middle-ground available to the teacher.[36] Quintilian also spells out the practical consequences of improperly balancing criticism, namely that students' abilities will suffer.

Yet, what precisely is at stake here, if not just mere literary quibbles or an elaborate song and dance to avoid upsetting others? There were, of course, the practical consequences that Quintilian mentioned, namely the concern that ungenerous praise discourages students. Ovid claimed (whether we believe him is another story) to have destroyed a number of his writings because of the unappreciative attitudes (*studiis malignis*) directed at them (*Tristia* 4.1.101). But at the heart of the matter lay an individual's authority to form and to express literary judgments. Misappreciation could not, without consequence, be chalked up to the quirks and predilections of aesthetic taste. Taste demanded reasons and the risk of censure for unfair judgment could not be cast aside with a light-hearted *de gustibus non disputandum*. To fail to appreciate because of bias or the inability to compete with potential rivals entailed a serious flaw in the faculty of judgment (*iudicium*).[37] Criticism without a statement of preferences could bring about the stigma of being a hack critic, always unwilling to praise.[38]

As we might expect, what passed for *malignitas* remained a matter of subjective interpretation. Suetonius demonstrates just this point within his scathing depiction of Nero's participation in a competitive *recitatio* (*Nero* 23.3):

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[36] Cf. Rheinhardt and Winterbottom 2006 *ad loc.* for a discussion of *malignus* and *effusus*.

[37] Feeney 2002 reads Horace's *Epistle to Augustus* not only as a form of literary criticism and history, but itself as a piece of literature that inserts itself into the literary tradition it discusses. If so, then Horace's desire not to be seen to judge *maligne* is more significant: to give an impression of *malignitas* would not only call into question his literary principles, but also his capacity as a poet.

[38] The moral component of praise and fame in Roman culture should also not be underestimated. Tacitus admonishes (*Ann.* 4.38): 'through scorn of fame the forms of virtuous action be scorned' (*contemptu famae contemni virtutes*). Lendon 1997, 41 summa-

> They [*sc.* the judges], as they were wise and learned men, ought to exclude anything of chance [Nero said]; and when men urged him to take courage, he grew more calm, but not without some discomfort, treating the silence and restraint of some as sourness and captiousness (*malignitate*).
>
> illos [*sc. iudices*] ut sapientis et doctos viros fortuita debere excludere; atque, ut auderet hortantibus, aequiore animo recedebat, ac ne sic quidem sine sollicitudine, taciturnitatem pudoremque quorundam pro tristitia et malignitate arguens.

Nero misinterprets the judges' restraint as the refusal to accord him his due. In Suetonius' generally unflattering take on Nero's literary aspirations, he implies that Nero has twisted around *malignitas* to his own ends. We can compare with this Seneca's discussion of flattery (*Naturales Quaestiones* 4a pr. 9):

> The more open adulation, the more shameless, the more it rubs the redness from its face, the more it makes others blush and the more quickly it wins. And so we've come to such a point of nonsense that a man who flatters sparingly is regarded as captious (*maligno*).
>
> quo apertior est adulatio, quo improbior, quo magis frontem suam perfricuit, cecidit alienam, hoc citius expugnat. eo enim iam dementiae venimus ut qui parce adulatur pro maligno sit.

The physical symptoms described are, of course, the blushing that a Roman associated with *pudor*, the feeling of shame arising from knowingly contradicting social norms. In Seneca's description *pudor* arises from an individual's disregard for his own status and self-worth through excessive fawning.

Thus the delicate and complex task of ascribing appropriate praise placed a considerable burden on the Roman faculty of judgment. One's *iudicium* must find the middle ground between being *malignus* and being *effusus*, to use Quintilian's terms. Excessive praise likewise indicated a vitiated *iudicium*; that vice went under the name of *adulatio* and carried a stigma just as *malignitas* did. It is perhaps no coincidence that *adulatio* in Seneca's passage and *malignitas* at Livy 38.50 (discussed above) share a connection to *pudor*.[39] Both *adulatio* and *malignitas* contradict the norms

rizes: 'In neither Greek nor Latin are morality and prestige clearly distinct mental realms'.

[39] The meaning of *pudor* is different in each case, but the underlying principle remains the same. At Livy 38.50, it is a 'sensitivity to shame' (*pudor*) that prevents an individual from acting with *malignitas*, because one would feel *pudor* ('shame') were one

that govern the ascription of social recognition and to err on either side could trigger a Roman's sense of *pudor*, that is 'a displeasure with oneself caused by vulnerability to just criticism of a socially diminishing sort'.[40]

Malignitas forcefully demonstrates the anxieties and complications inherent in the navigation of Roman social space and in the consequences of taking a false step. In the often zero-sum game of acquiring honor in the Roman world, one could understandably desire the failure of others, yet to be caught disparaging what one should rightly praise is itself a dishonorable act.[41] An individual deemed *malignus* is seen to be violating the rules of the game, and social cheating carried social consequences.

5. Malignitas *and literary posturing*

Malignitas not only defines an unacceptable limit whose boundary individuals cautiously respected. It can likewise be employed as a strategy of literary posturing, in which authors use the term as they present their work to an audience. The letter from Pliny to Erucius can be read as one such example, as can passages from Phaedrus and Martial. In the prologue to his fourth book of fables Phaedrus wards off possible criticism while staking his claim to fame (4 pr. 15–20):

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to be *malignus*; in Seneca's account one feels (or should feel) *pudor* when employing or even witnessing *adulatio*.

[40] Kaster 1997, 4. A significantly modified discussion of *pudor* is found at Kaster 2005, 28–65. *Malignitas* as the opposite of *adulatio* occurs as well in Tacitus, for whom *adulatio* is a form of enslavement, but *malignitas* is merely a false kind of freedom (*Historiae* 1.1): 'you recoil from the obsequiousness of a writer; disparagement (*obtrectatio*) and biting envy (*livor*) are heard with pricked-up ears. You see, there's a nasty crime of servitude in flattery (*adulationi*) and the deceptive impression of freedom in unjust criticism (*malignitati*)' (*sed ambitionem scriptoris facile averseris, obtrectatio et livor pronis auribus accipiuntur; quippe adulationi foedum crimen servitutis, malignitati falsa species libertatis inest*). For discussion of the passage see Damon 2004, and Luce 1989 on bias in historiography. Lendon 1997, 58 is illuminating: 'He who lauded the unworthy—the flatterer—, or blamed the worthy—the slanderer—was a wretched and hated creature in aristocratic society'.

[41] Acquisition of honor is zero-sum insofar as it requires the competitive exclusion of certain individuals from membership among the praiseworthy. However, for the elect an exchange of praise could benefit all parties and was a regular, nearly obligatory feature in the mutual self-fashioning of the Roman elite: 'since praising someone and thus increasing his honour cost none of one's own, a great man could carry on any number of mutually laudatory correspondences. Indeed, one of the chief purposes of friends was to praise' (Lendon 1997, 57, discussing letter writing).

> If captiousness (*malignitas*) wishes to carp at this book
> when it can't compete, let it carp.
> I've got my fame, because you and those like you
> copy my words into your scrolls
> and judge my work worthy of preservation.
> Why should I desire unlettered applause?
>
> hunc [*sc. librum*] obtrectare si volet malignitas,
> imitari dum non possit, obtrectet licet.
> mihi parta laus est, quod tu, quod similes tui
> vestras in chartas verba transfertis mea
> dignumque longa iudicatis memoria.
> inlitteratum plausum cur desidero?

Martial defends his poetry at 7.26.9–10 in a quaint address to his poems, represented by the word *scazon*, that is the meter of some of his epigrams, telling his poetry to go in search of his patron:

> If you want to be safe against the unappreciative (*malignos*)
> go meet my Apollinaris, scazon.
>
> contra malignos esse si cupis tutus,
> Apollinarem conveni meum, scazon.[42]

We find here a careful strategy to defend one's work and to assert one's literary achievements. Yet how do these examples differ from the other uses of *malignitas* discussed earlier? In literary posturing there are at least two minor modifications to the typical uses of *malignitas* discussed further above. In those cases, a speaker employs *malignitas* to denote a judgment that someone else has already made. It involves two processes: X challenges Y's judgment and states that Y has failed to accord appropriate recognition to Z. In literary posturing authors follow a slightly modified scheme: X challenges Y's (possible) judgment and states that Y may not accord appropriate recognition to X. Thus, there is some variation in what is being defended, my work or someone else's. Another difference lies in the temporal placement of an allegedly unappreciative judgment. The concerns of Martial and Phaedrus are preemptive, stating that at some (undetermined) point in the future their works may not receive acclaim from someone else who is *ipso facto malignus*.

[42] Cf. *malignitas* at Martial 4.86.7 and the discussion in Vioque 2002, 191–195. Catullus famously addressed his own poems in a similar manner (*Carmen* 47): *adeste, hendecasyllabi, quot estis*.

Essential to the aesthetic uses of *malignitas* is the relation between 'badness' and 'goodness'. Although *malignitas* condemns another's failed judgment, it simultaneously praises the object under discussion (again, my work or someone else's). Thus, *malignitas* always denotes a kind of badness (your failed judgment), as it implicitly posits the goodness of some literary enterprise (my good work, my friend's laudable poems, etc.). At a stroke it dishes out reproach and praise. This act of implicit praise is similar to what I termed the 'corrective function' in Livy above and underscores a speaker's intentions in employing *malignitas*, that is, not only what one means by using the term, but the point of doing so. The larger context carefully separates the meaning of *malignitas* from the ends to which it is employed: *malignitas* itself denotes a form of social damage, but it is employed as a means of social damage control.

Now Phaedrus and Martial uniquely incorporate *malignitas* into programmatic statements on their poetry.[43] Partly motivating their recourse to *malignitas* may be the innovative nature of their works. Phaedrus attempts to Romanize Greek fable, and Martial, although he lists Roman predecessors, nevertheless works in a genre that was on the margins of Rome's poetic canon.[44] I suggest that *malignitas* holds an important connection to the way in which imperial authors related to their predecessors and carved out a place for themselves in the literary tradition.[45]

This was particularly evident in the field of rhetoric toward the end of the first century CE. Quintilian, Tacitus, and Pliny expended considerable effort to come to terms with a rhetorical tradition heavily indebted to the age of Cicero. We can see what they were confronting by looking back at the early part of the first century, when Seneca

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[43] Cf. Horace's use of *malignum vulgus* in *Carmina* 2.16, which may be slightly different. Rheinhardt and Winterbottom 2006, 56 rightly compare (with some hesitation) the example at Horace 2.16 to the use of *malignus* at Quintilian *Institutio* 2.2.6 (discussed *infra*). A later [Senecan] epigram (*Carmen* 804) uses the phrase *turba maligna* in a similar sense: *Phoebe, fave coeptis nil grande petentibus aut quod / a te transferri turba maligna velit.* Note the distinctly 'transactional' language in [Seneca]'s epigram (*petentibus*, *transferri*).

[44] Indeed, the unorthodoxy of their works and its innovative element has partly contributed to their general neglect in the modern period. Apart from Henderson 2001, Phaedrus remains largely unstudied. Martial has fared better, but his ascent is recent and part of a larger renaissance, in the last two decades, of interest in Flavian-era poetry and culture.

[45] I do not wish to overlook the fact that literature could offend others, especially those prone to misinterpretation. Imperial authors were wary of being thought to attack the powerful. Cf. Bartsch 1994 for a discussion of this problem and the use of 'doublespeak' as one way of coping with it.

the Elder gives us a taste of how early imperial orators related to the republican past through the figure of Cicero (*Suasoriae* 6.24):

> Even Asinius Pollio, who recounted Verres (Cicero's victim) dying most bravely, alone of all men unflatteringly (*maligne*) described Cicero's death; nevertheless he still bore full testimony, however unwillingly, to Cicero's merit.
>
> Pollio quoque Asinius, qui Verrem, Ciceronis reum, fortissime morientem tradidit, Ciceronis mortem solus ex omnibus maligne narrat, testimonium tamen quamvis invitus plenum ei reddit.

In the early part of the century Seneca the Elder could ascribe *malignitas* to Pollio's irreverence for Cicero as part of the larger rhetorical and cultural phenomenon that Kaster has termed 'Becoming "CICERO"'.[46] Early imperial authors modeled themselves on Cicero as 'a cultural hero, an icon more important as an abstract representation than the historical reality of the man and the sensible reality of his words'. That icon was no more a way of understanding the past as it was of defining the present, and individuals appealed to the idea of Cicero as a way of competing with their peers.[47]

Toward the end of the first century CE this conception of oratory's past and the rhetorical values that animated it still carried weight, but had also been subject to close scrutiny and modification. Pliny and Quintilian carry on, in part, deference to Cicero *qua* rhetorical icon, while seeking to rival his greatness (Pliny) or to utilize him as a model for oratorical renaissance (Quintilian). Yet nearly 150 years after Cicero's death he was no longer solely an icon whose achievements had vanished with the man. He could also be regarded as one among many models in a new era of rhetorical excellence, when 'becoming "CICERO"' became 'overcoming "CICERO"'. Nowhere are this transformation and the complications it entailed more effectively documented than in Tacitus' *Dialogus de Oratoribus*.

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[46] Kaster 1998, 254.

[47] Kaster 1998, 257 on Seneca's discussion of Pollio's claim to rival Cicero at *Suasoriae* 6.25: 'When Seneca here invokes the idea of rivalry—*certasse cum Cicerone videatur*—he reminds us of the service that a canon performs in the conduct of certain kinds of competition: men seeking to establish a pecking order of cultural status through (in this case) the exercise of eloquence use Cicero as the standard against which they measure themselves and others—and often, as a stick with which they can thrash each other more or less publicly'.

6. Malignitas *and Tacitus'* Dialogus de Oratoribus[48]

The *DDO* calls upon *malignitas* to set into motion and to add depth to fundamental themes of the work: how the modern age makes aesthetic decisions, what social factors influence these judgments, and to what extent attitudes (such as *malignitas*) shape contemporary understandings of both the past and the present. Tacitus explains how he came to hear a conversation, set in the reign of Vespasian, between the rhetorical luminaries of his youth, Marcus Aper, Vipstanus Messalla, and Curiatius Maternus. He arrives at the house of Maternus, the orator turned poet, on the heels of his role models Marcus Aper and Iulius Secundus (2.1–2):

> And so the day after Curiatius Maternus had recited his *Cato*, when he was said to have offended the sensibilities of the powerful, as if in the plot of his tragedy he had forgotten himself and only thought of Cato and talk of it was thick about town, Marcus Aper and Iulius Secundus came to visit him. They were the most sought after luminaries of our forum, both of whom I used to listen to eagerly not only at the bar, but at home too, and I followed them about in public with an impressive passion for learning and with some amount of juvenile overzealousness; I would even take in deeply their conversations, arguments, and the secrets of their private discourse, although a great many unjustly thought (*maligne opinarentur*) that Secundus lacked a ready tongue and that Aper had achieved fame for his eloquence more by his genius and natural talent than by learning and letters. You see, Secundus didn't lack a pure, concise, and (as much as was necessary) free-flowing manner of speech, and Aper, who was grounded in all learning, despised letters more than he was ignorant of them, on the grounds that he would achieve greater fame for his diligence and hard work, if his talent was not seen to lean upon the props of foreign arts.

> nam postero die quam Curiatius Maternus Catonem recitaverat, cum offendisse potentium animos diceretur, tamquam in eo tragoediae argumento sui oblitus tantum Catonem cogitasset, eaque de re per urbem frequens sermo haberetur, venerunt ad eum Marcus Aper et Iulius Secundus, celeberrima tum ingenia fori nostri, quos ego utrosque non modo in iudiciis studiose audiebam, sed domi quoque et in publico adsectabar mira studiorum cupiditate et quodam ardore iuvenili, ut fabulas quoque eorum et disputationes et arcana semotae dictionis penitus exciperem, quamvis maligne plerique opinarentur, nec Secundo promptum esse sermonem et Aprum ingenio potius et vi naturae quam institutione et litteris famam eloquentiae consecutum. nam et Secundo purus et pressus

[48] Hereafter referred to as *DDO*.

> et, in quantum satis erat, profluens sermo non defuit, et Aper omni eruditione imbutus contemnebat potius litteras quam nesciebat, tamquam maiorem industriae et laboris gloriam habiturus, si ingenium eius nullis alienarum artium adminiculis inniti videretur.

The work's consideration of rhetorical excellence (*eloquentia*) opens with reference to *malignitas* and connects it to the dialogue's first explicit judgment. Many (*plerique*) have inadequately assessed the rhetorical capabilities of Secundus and Aper. The passage impressively parallels Cicero's *de Oratore* in terms of language, theme, and characterization.[49] The phrase *quamvis plerique maligne opinarentur* sends the reader to the opening of *de Oratore*'s second book, where Cicero depicts the common opinion of the education that Crassus and Antonius possessed (2.1):

> The predominant opinion (*magna opinio*) in our youth, my brother Quintus, if you remember, was that Lucius Crassus had attained no more learning than what he'd had in his first boyhood education; as for Marcus Antonius, they said he was entirely lacking any learning and ignorant. And there were many who, although they could see that this wasn't true, nevertheless would gladly say what I've mentioned about these famed orators in order more easily to deter us from learning, once we'd been fired by a passion for knowledge.

> magna nobis pueris, Quinte frater, si memoria tenes, opinio fuit L. Crassum non plus attigisse doctrinae, quam quantum prima illa puerili institutione potuisset; M. autem Antonium omnino omnis eruditionis expertem atque ignarum fuisse; erantque multi qui, quamquam non ita se rem habere arbitrarentur, tamen, quo facilius nos incensos studio discendi a doctrina deterrerent libenter id, quod dixi, de illis oratoribus praedicarent.

Cicero contradicts the misguided conception of these orators' education, namely that Crassus possessed elementary learning and Antonius as good as none. The prevalent opinion (*magna opinio … multi qui*) in that work becomes the *DDO*'s *maligna opinio* (*plerique maligne opinarentur*). Tacitus, like Cicero, is quick to reject it.

The differences between the two passages are at least as important as the similarity that Tacitus' allusion would seem to create. Cicero merely wishes to contradict widespread misunderstandings about the education of Crassus and Antonius. Tacitus focuses upon the rhetorical abilities of his role models, not merely their education, and goes

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[49] At the strictly formal level the description of the interlocutors' arrival *postero die* recalls, for example, the entrance of Catulus at *de Oratore* 2.12. Most importantly Tacitus models the depiction of Aper upon Cicero's description of Crassus and Antonius.

one step further by declaring that *malignitas* underlies the perceived disregard for his comrades. The introduction thus inserts the *DDO* into the tradition of Ciceronian dialogue, while at the same time creating an important shift in focus. Tacitus will not merely discuss rhetorical education and training as Cicero had done a century and a half earlier. Rather, *malignitas* becomes a key factor in the very real and fundamental debate over oratory's viability and value in the Empire. Oratory's innovations, purpose, and the judgments placed upon it are, after all, the central questions of the dialogue: how had rhetoric and the ways of evaluating it changed since the age of Cicero?

The occurrences of *malignitas* in Aper's Second Speech (15.1; 18.3; 23.6) and Messalla's First Speech (25.5; 25.6) bring it into conjunction with the work's fundamental considerations. But its restriction to the central speeches, the third and fourth of six, is telling. For at the heart of that debate between Marcus Aper, the staunch champion of modern oratory, and Vipstanus Messalla, the yesteryear disciple of Cicero, lay the modern age's conception of the ancient orators (*antiqui*), not only who they were and when they existed, but also what of the ancients to admire and what to reject.

Aper focuses upon the way in which preconceptions about the past and present affect aesthetic judgments. Shortly after Messalla's belated arrival at the discussion, Aper remarks upon Messalla's disregard for the modern age (15.1):

> Messalla, you don't leave off marveling solely at the old and inveterate pursuits while you deride and scorn those of our day. You know I've put up with your saying this often, when you contend, having forgotten about your and your brother's eloquence, that no one at this time is an orator; and you do so all the more daringly, I think, because you don't fear a reputation for misappreciation (*malignitatis*) since you deny yourself the glory that others grant you.

> non desinis, Messalla, vetera tantum et antiqua mirari, nostrorum autem temporum studia irridere atque contemnere. nam hunc tuum sermonem saepe excepi, cum oblitus et tuae et fratris tui eloquentiae neminem hoc tempore oratorem esse contenderes [antiquis], eo credo audacius quod malignitatis opinionem non verebaris, cum eam gloriam quam tibi alii concedunt ipsi tibi denegares.

Aper would seem to impute *malignitas* to Messalla's unfavorable assessment of present-day orators. Messalla denigrates the pursuits of the modern age without qualification. Yet Tacitus has Aper make his point in a fairly round-about manner, perhaps because a lot is at stake here

for both Tacitus and Aper. Out of simple respect for Messalla Aper could not brand him with *malignitas*; nor, in fact, could Tacitus. Doing so would call into question his own good judgment in taking Messalla as a rhetorical role model. Tacitus carefully arranges the statements here to make a number of different points. He seems to undercut Messalla's position by stressing typical motivations for denigration of the modern age. At the same time he avoids suggesting that Messalla is himself *malignus*. Messalla's saving grace is his own rhetorical excellence, which means that his judgments do not stem from his own inadequacy or refusal to participate in oratory.[50]

But Tacitus does not merely indulge in respectful politeness for Messalla. By underscoring Messalla's rhetorical achievement he demonstrates the existence of good orators. Tacitus thereby partly contradicts Messalla's position without undermining Messalla's rhetorical excellence.[51] Yet in seeing Messalla as an exception we are reminded of those who are not exceptional, and the implication is hard to miss: others condemn the modern day because of *malignitas*. This would help explain the fact that Aper's later uses of *malignitas* are no longer directed at Messalla, but at the modern age in general. At 18.3 Aper' employs *malignitas* when defending different rhetorical styles (18.3):

> I'm not seeking the most well spoken: I'm content to have shown for the moment that there is not just one face of eloquence, but in those men too whom you dub ancients many types [of oratory] are found and what is different is not automatically worse, rather it is a shortcoming of human captiousness (*malignitatis*) that the old is always recognized and the new is spurned.
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> nec quaero quis dissertissimus: hoc interim probasse contentus sum, non esse unum eloquentiae vultum, sed ⟨in⟩ illis quoque quos vos vocetis

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50 Cf. Horace's concern that he might be thought to praise *maligne* in *Epistles* 2.1 and Phaedrus' suggestion that *malignitas* arises when someone else cannot compete (4 pr. 16, cf. *supra* p. 417f.). Cf. Pliny, *Ep.* 9.5.2 on the fear of acquiring a reputation for *malignitas*.

51 This represents a more general tendency in Tacitus' painting of Messalla, whose assertions are often undermined or softened by the larger context of the work. For example, Maternus requests that Messalla discuss the failures of modern education, but does so while highlighting Messalla's near-perfect education (16). Messalla also decries the loss of the *tirocinium fori*, but in language that mirrors the work's introduction and especially its painting of Tacitus' rhetorical training and apprenticeship to Secundus and Aper. The frequent application of this technique to Messalla would seem to make it more than a mere coincidence. I believe that this is an intentional feature of Tacitus' dialogue strategy, which allows Messalla to serve as a foil for a number of important considerations, especially oratorical education and training, and to permit Tacitus to couch the discussion as a debate, while letting his own viewpoint come through.

> antiquos plures species deprehendi, nec statim deterius esse quod diversum est, vitio autem malignitatis humanae vetera semper in laude, praesentia in fastidio esse.

Aper applauds stylistic diversity as a way to defend innovation and in order to challenge the idea that there can be only one (Ciceronian) ideal for the modern orator to follow. He does not, however, simply reject the values of the Ciceronian age; although he defends modernity, he likewise praises and shows an intimate familiarity with Cicero's work. Tacitus even adds a Ciceronian pedigree to Aper's arguments: the same claims clothed in similar language appear in both the *Brutus* and the *De Oratore*.[52] Indeed, a fascinating appeal to and appropriation of Ciceronian authority informs Aper's second speech.[53] But the fundamental claim is that every age tends to disregard the present in favor of the past. Here Aper may seem to contradict Roman deference to the *mos maiorum*, but his sentiments are no less characteristic of Roman thought and Tacitus echoes them elsewhere.[54]

At the conclusion of his speech Aper connects *malignitas* to the historical position of those who judge (23.6):

> You see, Messalla, I observe both you imitating the most felicitous aspects of the ancients, and you, Maternus and Secundus, mix the brilliance of your conceits and the refinement of your diction with solemnity. You possess a discovery of material, a structuring of events, bountifulness whenever the case demands it, conciseness wherever possible, seemliness of composition, and clarity of thought. You exhibit emotions and check your license such that even if misappreciation (*malignitas*) and envy retard the judgments of our age, undoubtedly future generations will speak of you.

> nam et te Messalla, video laetissima quaeque antiquorum imitantem, et vos, Materne et Secunde, ita gravitati sensuum nitorem et cultum verborum miscetis, ea electio inventionis, is ordo rerum, ea quotiens causa poscit ubertas, ea quotiens permittitur brevitas, is compositionis

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[52] *Brutus* 204: *atque in his oratoribus illud animadvertendum est, posse esse summos qui inter se sint dissimiles*; *De Oratore* 3.25: *natura nulla est, ut mihi videtur, quae non habeat in suo genere res compluris dissimilis inter se, quae tamen consimili laude dignentur.*

[53] Cf. Döpp 1986, 17–19. Aper traces the development of *eloquentia* (19.1–20.7) and provides a stylistic analysis of the merits and deficits in the premier orators of Cicero's day (21.1–23.4).

[54] Cf. Gudeman 1914 *ad loc.* for the numerous parallels in other ancient authors. For discussion of this theme, see the very useful note by Woodman 1983, 278 on Velleius Paterculus 2.92.5: *praesentia invidia, praeterita veneratione prosequimur.* For Tacitus' own comments in this vein, cf. *Annales* 2.88: *vetera extollimus recentium incuriosi* and *Annales* 4.35: *suum cuique decus posteritas rependit.*

> decor, ea sententiarum planitas est, sic exprimitis affectus, sic libertatem temperatis, ut etiam si nostra iudicia malignitas et invidia tardaverit, verum de vobis dicturi sint posteri nostri.

Malignitas stands in the way of just appreciation for the—quite impressive—rhetorical abilities of the work's interlocutors. Aper here whittles down his previous proposition that *malignitas* in all ages hinders recognition of one's contemporaries to the specific claim that *malignitas* prevents adequate appreciation of his interlocutors. *Malignitas*, he asserts, may fail to give contemporary orators their due, but future generations will not make the same mistake.

That claim is neither casual nor a mere hackneyed commonplace, to use one commentator's description.[55] The literary design of the *DDO* subtly and deliberately works to support Aper's remarks. Tacitus reconstructs a decades-old conversation in which a character claims that 'our descendants will speak of us'. Without breaking the dramatic illusion and yet still hinting at the work's fictional status, Aper's closing words partly reflect a key function of the dialogue. In the *DDO* individual claims frequently receive support (or refutation) by the dramatic setting. In this case, Tacitus purports to recount a conversation held by the rhetorical luminaries of his youth and thereby turns Aper's prognosis into reality.[56] Modern scholars have tended to reject Aper's views, in part citing Tacitus' ostensibly pessimistic attitude toward the imperial period. Yet Tacitus also demonstrated optimism when comparing the present to the past.[57] And in any case it will prove more useful to search for resolution of that issue in Messalla's response to Aper's claims.

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[55] Gudeman 1914 *ad loc.* Given the long list of ancient authorities who make similar claims, I find it difficult to second Gudeman's (unexplained) conclusion that Aper's comment amounts to 'a hackneyed platitude' ('ein abgedroschener Gemeinplatz'). Such an interpretation clearly has much more to do with Gudeman's preconceptions of what the *DDO* says and his general aversion to Aper's positions. His take, however, reflects the bulk of scholarship on the *DDO*.

[56] Tacitus expresses a similar idea in the commemoration of his stepfather: *Agricola posteritati narratus et traditus superstes erit* (*Agricola* 46), however without the presence of *malignitas*. Aper offers the same set of considerations that arise in the literary posturing of Phaedrus, Martial, and Pliny: a claim to fame combined with the suggestion that *malignitas* inhibits that fame. Cf. Sen. *Ep*. 79.17.

[57] For example, after his praise of Vespasian's mores in the *Annales*, Tacitus muses (*Ann*. 3.55): 'Or we might better say that there is some kind of cycle in events, and the vicissitudes of ages turn as do those of morals; and not everything in previous ages was better, rather our age too brought forth much in the way of recognition and practices to be imitated. Indeed let our competitions in honor with our ancestors endure' (*nisi forte rebus cunctis inest quidam velut orbis, ut quem ad modum temporum vices, ita morum vertantur;*

That response arrives in the following speech. In sections 25.5–6 Messalla answers Aper's proposition at 18.4–5 that even the giants of the past criticized one another's style:

> Now as to the fact that they mutually carped at one another (and there are some things in their letters on the basis of which a mutual captiousness (*malignitas*) is uncovered), that's not a fault of orators, but of men. You see, I think that Calvus and Asinius and Cicero himself often were envious and affected by the other faults of human weakness. I think that Brutus alone among these men uncovered his true judgment, not with detraction or envy, but frankly and generously.
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> nam quod in vicem se obtrectaverunt (et sunt aliqua epistulis eorum inserta, ex quibus mutua malignitas detegitur), non est oratorum vitium, sed hominum. nam et Calvum et Asinium et ipsum Ciceronem credo solitos [et livere] et invidere et ceteris humanae infirmitatis vitiis adfici; solum inter hos arbitror Brutum non malignitate nec invidia sed simpliciter et ingenue iudicium animi sui detexisse.

Characteristic of the speeches in the *DDO*, Messalla's arguments do not actually contradict Aper's, but bring the discussion of *malignitas* onto new ground, compounding and adding nuance to the issue. Messalla's remark (*mutua malignitas detegitur*), in fact, confirms Aper's previous claims about the transhistorical tendency to disregard the present in favor of the past. Even parallels in language point us back to the specifics of his argument: Messalla's *humanae infirmitatis vitiis* picks up Aper's *vitio malignitatis humanae*. Messalla defends the human flaws of the ancients, but thereby reiterates Aper's claim that *malignitas* forms an integral part of human interaction, an attitude that refuses to accord sufficient praise to the present. There is another side too; for by claiming that Cicero's contemporaries possessed this flaw, Messalla likens both periods to one another with implications that he may not fully recognize. Both the Ciceronian and the modern period were prone to *malignitas*; and if they exhibit the same tendency for captiousness, then both periods may equally be worthy of praise. Indeed, this is precisely the point that Aper had sought to demonstrate, and it receives confirmation by Maternus at the dialogue's conclusion (41.5): 'let each man benefit from the good in his own age without the detraction of another' (*bono saeculi sui quisque citra obtrectationem alterius utatur*).[58]

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nec omnia apud priores meliora, sed nostra quoque aetas multa laudis et artium imitanda posteris tulit. verum haec nobis ⟨*in*⟩ *maiores certamina ex honesto maneant*).

[58] If my suggestion above is correct that *obtrectatio* is used primarily to attack recog-

7. *Conclusion*

Malignitas plays an important role in the *DDO*'s lively and broad-ranging discussion of the purpose and value of contemporary oratory. The discussion of imperial literary judgments likewise highlights the categories and prejudices that influence such judgments. In turning to *malignitas*, Tacitus both employs and explores a key term of imperial aesthetics to defend the literary values of the Empire. Far from confirming the prevalent modern view of the *DDO* as a dialogue about oratory's decline,[59] *malignitas* in the *DDO* underscores the refusal to accord contemporary oratory its due. Its presence in the work suggests that oratory continued to be a practice worthy of recognition and praise. The *DDO* issues a practical and forceful challenge to exclusive reverence for 'CICERO'.[60]

Malignitas tellingly reveals one of the ways in which imperial authors conceived of their own literary achievement in relation to the long tradition of Roman letters. For rhetoric that achievement was inextricably bound to and influenced by understandings of the republican past. More generally, I have sought to demonstrate the importance of *malignitas* in contexts of evaluating and honoring literary achievement. *Malignitas*' badness is distinct and specific, and highlights the powerful and competing social forces in the competition for social power, for honor and fame. It denotes a form of badness that seeks to deny goodness,

nized excellence, then Maternus' use of the term would partly underscore the *DDO*'s positive assessment of modern oratory.

[59] This is the long-held view of the *DDO*. Williams 1978 is among its strongest English-language exponents. See Mayer 2001 for recent arguments in support of the thesis of decline. A few challengers should be named: Costa 1969 first suggested that Aper's arguments merit closer attention. Both Champion 1994 and Goldberg 1999 have powerfully defended Aper against his modern detractors. Dominik 1997 briefly discusses the similarities between Aper's literary values and those of Tacitus. Dominik 2007 further supports Aper's arguments in favor of modern oratory. Dammer 2005 essentially repeats the traditional 'pessimistic' take on Aper's aesthetic arguments, though he fails to take into account Dominik 1997.

[60] Kaster 1998 notes the application of religious language to describe Cicero in rhetorical writings from the early Empire through Quintilian. The *DDO* frequently employs religious language throughout, however not in connection with Cicero, but with poetry and the use of poetic language. In so doing, Tacitus presents, I believe, a deliberate counter-model to imperial associations of Cicero with 'rhetorical sanctity' and thereby coopts religious language as a way to describe imperial rhetoric's increasing reliance upon poetic language. That, however, is the subject for another time.

in what this chapter has sought to demonstrate, the refusal to acknowledge literary virtues. Despite the term's complexities and transformations, one characteristic seemed to remain constant: *omnis malignitas est virtuti contraria.*

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CHAPTER SIXTEEN

THE REPRESENTATION AND ROLE OF BADNESS IN SENECA'S MORAL TEACHING: A CASE FROM THE *NATURALES QUAESTIONES* (*NQ* 1.16)

Florence Limburg

1. *Introduction*

This chapter will focus on an elaborate portrayal of a peculiar case of depravity in the work of the philosopher Seneca. This case is so eye-catching that it immediately raises the question of its *function(s)*. Seneca is of obvious interest to a student of 'badness'.[1] Moral evil is strongly present in his philosophical work, frowned upon, of course, yet also painted in broad colors. This fact has raised some questions: Seneca, the avowed combatant of vice, sometimes seems to indulge overly in his descriptions of morally reprehensible behavior.[2]

The case central to this chapter occurs in Seneca's *Naturales Quaestiones* (*NQ*). In this work composed of several books, Seneca inquires into the causes of certain natural phenomena. Moralizing passages written in a strongly rhetorical style introduce and conclude the different books. Several of these prefaces and epilogues contain descriptions of perverted and decadent behavior. In *NQ* 1, Seneca explains how the rainbow and several fiery heavenly phenomena come about. The rainbow appears to be caused by mirroring: it is said to be a reflection of the sun formed in a moist cloud. The last two chapters of the book discuss the theme of mirroring from a moral point of view. In chapter 17, Seneca explains that nature had not invented mirrors for those decadent usages to which mankind now put them; instead, mirrors had originally been given to man so that he might achieve knowledge of himself

[1] See also the chapter by Wilcox in this volume.

[2] As Gourévitch 1974, 311 for instance says: 'L'immoralité du monde dans lequel il vit est en effet le thème central de toute son œuvre; il la décrit, non parfois sans une certaine complaisance'. Cf. Leitão 1998, 127–128.

and the world. There follows a description of the gradual evolution in the misuse of the mirror for the purpose of luxury. Seneca concludes this episode by saying that in his day mirrors are not only used for the purpose of luxury and adornment: they have become indispensable for every vice (1.17.10). This sentence refers back to the previous chapter.[3] Indeed, in chapter 16 Seneca has told the story—or *fabella*, as he calls it (1.16.1)—of Hostius Quadra's misuse of mirrors for the purpose of his sexual satisfaction, as a tool in his couplings with men and women alike. Magnifying mirrors enable Hostius Quadra to see the part of his actions that he cannot see by means of his eyes alone, and moreover they amplify the images.

2. *The problem and its solutions*

Seneca describes Hostius Quadra's misdemeanor in such detail that through the ages scholars took exception to the passage. The omission of this chapter from the text of a 1794 edition (Ruhkopf), allegedly because it was not necessary to the argumentation of the book, may well have been triggered by the scabrous content of the passage.[4] Modern scholarship, too, finds the description problematic, but it deals with the problem in more cautious ways. In his recent monograph on the *Naturales Quaestiones*, Gauly has formulated the central scholarly concern. He speaks of:

> Ein Problem…das die Interpreten seit sehr langer Zeit beschäftigt hat, die Frage nämlich, ob nicht die breit entfaltete, detailreiche und anschauliche Darstellung den vorgeblichen Zweck der *fabella*, die Bekämpfung des Lasters, desavouiert.[5]

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[3] Cf. Gauly 2004, 125.

[4] The decision of Ruhkopf is mentioned by Waiblinger 1977, 4 n. 28: 'F.E. Ruhkopf, L.A. Senecas physikalische Untersuchungen aus dem Lateinischen übersetzt und mit Anmerkungen versehen, Erster Teil, Leipzig 1794, VII: (*Nat. Quaest.* I 16 ist ausgelassen) "Übrigens kann es in Absicht auf den Zusammenhang vollkommen entbehrt werden"'. However, it must be added that Ruhkopf's remark may also be understood in the context of the questions that have been raised about the composition of the *Naturales Quaestiones*, and the place and function of the moralizing 'inserts' in the work. On this question, see for instance the recent monographs of Berno 2003, Gauly 2004, and Limburg 2007.

[5] 2004, 127. Gauly 2004, 127–128 mentions other scholars who have found *NQ* 1.16 problematic (cf. also 2004, 115).

The extent, detail, and vividness of the description are considered problematic. It is suggested that such a description belies the moral teaching Seneca aims at providing. Gauly speaks about the 'alleged goal' ('den vorgeblichen Zweck') of the *fabella*. At the beginning of the chapter, Seneca indeed mentions its purpose as well he might, given the scandalous nature of the passage. He says to the reader (*NQ* 1.16.1):

> At this point I want to tell you a little story so that you may understand how lust scorns no instrument for rousing passion and how ingenious it is for inciting its own aberration.[6]

> hoc loco tibi volo narrare fabellam, ut intellegas quam nullum instrumentum irritandae voluptatis libido contemnat et ingeniosa sit ad incitandum furorem suum.

The passage is meant to clarify something to the reader, or at least, this is its avowed goal. The term *fabella* that Seneca uses to characterize the story also points in the direction of a didactic intent. As Gauly says: '*fabella* bezeichne bei ihm [Seneca] eine Erzählung, die in mehr oder weniger witziger Weise auf Unterweisung des Lesers zielt'.[7] However, as said, the detailed description is thought to belie this didactic purpose.

Several ideas have been formulated to explain the elaborate description of vice in *NQ* 1.16. Thus, it has been suggested that the account must also have been meant to contribute to the pleasure of the reader.[8] Gauly himself sees the solution to the problem in an interpretation of the passage in terms of metaphor.[9] If Hostius Quadra's sexual misbehavior stands for something else, the lengthy description might have a sense, it becomes functional. Gauly shows that sexual misbehavior could also be seen in terms of upsetting a social order. A Roman male who took on a passive sexual role went against social norms: with his behavior, Hostius Quadra abolishes social ranks. Gauly adds that the

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[6] All translations are from the relevant Loeb editions, with adaptations.

[7] 2004, 121. Gauly adds (2004,120): 'es ist nicht leicht zu sagen, was dieses recht seltene Wort hier meint'. Cf. Berno 2002, 224 n. 61 about *fabella* and *fabula*. The terms *fabula* and *fabella* (cf. *NQ* 3.26.7, 4b.7.2, 5.15.1), generally referring to an account of a fictitious character (cf. *Rhet. Her.* 1.8.13), may, however, have a wider range, as appears from *Ep.* 77.10, where the term *fabella* is used to characterize the account of a suicide. This *fabella* is also said to have a useful or didactic character: it provides an *exemplum*. According to Lausberg 1973, 229, the *fabella* is less refined and simpler than the *fabula*. Thomsen 1979–1980, 187–190 points out a few characteristics of the *fabella*, such as its style and the appearance of introductory and concluding passages.

[8] So Gross 1989, 59; see also Richlin 1983, 221. For the element of the reader's pleasure in the description of vice in satire, see Walters 1998.

[9] 2004, 120ff., especially 127, 129.

terms *monstrum* and *portentum*, by which Hostius is described (1.16.3, 5, 6), show that he has a symbolic character (he is 'ein Phänomen mit Zeichencharakter'). Hostius is the same kind of portent as certain natural phenomena, such as earthquakes, that are described in the *Naturales Quaestiones*. Thus, Gauly concludes, the extreme perversion of Hostius Quadra is the sign of social chaos and the end of humanity. An interpretation of the passage in terms of metaphor is also given by Thomsen,[10] who claims that certain terms used by Seneca refer to the idea of religious impurity. Thomsen believes that in the context of the *Naturales Quaestiones*, the function of the story is that of a theodicy: the irreverent Hostius is struck down by the gods (he is killed by his slaves, as Seneca mentions in 1.16.1).

Other scholars have asked what the place of the Hostius Quadra episode in *Naturales Quaestiones* Book 1 is, and have integrated the episode into an interpretation of the whole book. For instance, Leitão argues that the discussion of natural phenomena in the book has a moral aspect. Whereas in the preface the perfect, celestial light is represented, in the central part of the book 'distorted lights' are discussed.[11] The distortion of these phenomena increases as the book proceeds, and culminates in the description of Hostius Quadra's vice. Leitão adds that the preface of the book concerns the divine, the epilogue the bestial, and the scientific discussion is about man.[12] Recently, Bartsch, too, has pointed out the relevance of *Naturales Quaestiones* Book 1 for the understanding of the Hostius Quadra account. As she says:

> The account would stand for nothing more than a condemnation of one man's proclivities were it not for the philosophical and scientific context in which we have found it embedded.[13]

As we see, an interpretation of the Hostius Quadra episode in terms of metaphor, or in the context of Book 1, allows for different possibilities.

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[10] 1979–1980, 183ff. (especially 192, 194).

[11] 1998, 128–129.

[12] 1998, 138. For reactions to Leitão see Berno 2002, 216; 2003, 34–35, Gauly 2004, 130–131 and Williams 2005, 143–145. Williams also relates chapter 16 to the central part of the book: for instance, he compares Hostius' perverted 'vision' with the incorrect vision of the anonymous interlocutor who reacts to Seneca's ideas (2005, 145ff., especially 150, 151). In my opinion, the Hostius Quadra account is related to the rest of Book 1 principally as indicated in section 1 of this chapter: it forms an example of misuse of mirroring by man. Cf. Bartsch 2006, 106.

[13] 2006, 108. Bartsch 2006, 103–114 contains a discussion of the Hostius Quadra episode.

However, it is not always clear how we should understand such interpretations in the context of Seneca's moral teachings. More important, in my opinion, is that these interpretations do not, in the end, explain why Seneca gives such a detailed description of perverted behavior. In this chapter, I will try to address these points in an alternative reading of the passage. The text of *NQ* 1.16 will serve as the starting point of my inquiry. First, I will analyze the *representation* of Hostius Quadra's vice. Afterwards, I will turn to the question of its *role*.

3. *The representation of Hostius Quadra's vice*

The whole passage conveys the same message: Hostius Quadra is committing horrible deeds. At the beginning of the passage, Seneca states that when Hostius was killed by his slaves, the emperor Augustus did not judge that retribution was necessary—Augustus almost said that Hostius had been killed justly (1.16.1).[14] At the end of the passage Hostius himself takes the stage (1.16.7–9), and speaks of his 'achievements' with a proud awareness. He surrounds himself with mirrors, he says, 'so that no one may think he does not know what he is doing' (1.16.7). The fact that nature has provided poorly for human lusts is no impediment for him, as he proclaims: the magnifying mirrors overcome this defect. What would be the use of his depravity, if he sinned only to the extent nature had made possible? (1.16.8–9) Scholars have remarked that Hostius represents an anti-model of correct behaviors and attitudes; his words testify to this, especially when he expresses the intent to surpass nature.[15] Seneca concludes the passage with the exclamation 'shameful behavior!' (*facinus indignum*), adding that Hostius ought

[14] Walters 1998, 363 comments: 'He [Hostius] has become one of the outsiders who can be killed with impunity'. Little to nothing is known about the historical Hostius Quadra. Seneca says that his obscenity was put on stage (16.1, for the different possibilities to interpret this passage see, e.g., Walters 1998, 362–363, Williams 2005, 146 n. 18). For the lack of further information about Hostius and for information about others who (mis)used mirrors (Horace, according to Suetonius *de Poetis* 47.12–15 Reifferscheid [*vita Horatii* 56–58], although there may have been a confusion between Hostius and Horatius), see the references in Vottero's edition *ad loc.* (nn. 3, 5 *ad* 16.1) and Gauly 2004, 121–122, 127.

[15] Cf. Bartsch, 2006, 109ff., who among other things speaks of a parody of the Stoic's awareness of his acts; Berno 2002, 221–224; 2003, 45–50, who has described Hostius as an 'anti-*sapiens*'. It remains difficult to estimate to what extent indications that Hostius is an anti-*sapiens* are present in the text of *NQ* 1.16. For instance, Berno contrasts Hostius' sexual *patientia* to the *patientia* of the sage. However, since *patientia* is a normal term in a

to have been killed in front of one of his mirrors. In these last remarks, the negative judgment on the protagonist's behavior is most clear. This adverse judgment is in line with what we know about the limited tolerance for homoeroticism and unreproductive sex expressed by various thinkers in the imperial period (including Seneca himself).[16]

The main part of the passage describes Hostius' deeds at some length: in §§2, 3, 4, 5 and 7 vivid descriptions are given, varying in the details, but agreeing on the basic facts. This repetition emphasizes the (mis)deeds Hostius commits. Vividness and a detailed representation are characteristics of the rhetorical device of *evidentia*, by which an account is presented so as to make it come alive for the listener.[17] As Quintilian points out in his discussion of *evidentia* (8.3.67–69), when one describes something in detail, instead of summarizing it with one statement, one achieves a greater effect. Thus, in describing Hostius' vice in such detail, Seneca certainly achieves more than by a neat summary of his activities. Having the protagonist of the story speak himself, as Seneca does with Hostius Quadra in 1.16.7–9, was another characteristic of rhetorical *evidentia*.[18]

There do seem to have been certain restrictions to the description of obscenity in Latin prose.[19] In this context, certain passages such as the reference to Hostius' partner in vice as a 'stallion', in the 'false size' of whose 'very member' Hostius delights (1.16.2), could certainly have been considered shocking language, and the descriptions too explicit. However, this effect may well have been intended. It is noticeable that, although the activities Hostius engages in as well as the partners he has

sexual context (cf. Adams 1982, 189–190), it is difficult to establish whether it may also be regarded as an echo of the sage's (very different) *patientia*.

[16] See Bartsch 2006, 5, 99–103, especially 101 with nn. 141 and 142, containing references to further literature.

[17] See Lausberg 1973, 399 ff. ('die *evidentia* … ist die lebhaft-detaillierte Schilderung eines rahmenmäßigen Gesamtgegenstandes … durch Aufzählung (wirklicher oder in der Phantasie erfundener) sinnenfälliger Einzelheiten'); Lausberg's main source on the subject is Quintilian 8.3.61 ff. (cf. 9.2.40, 4.2.123–124). One of the areas in which *evidentia* was applied was the characterization of a person, in terms of vice or virtue (the χαρακτηρισμός or *descriptio*, Lausberg 1973, 406).

[18] See Lausberg 1973, 402, 406, 407 ff.

[19] See Richlin 1983, 13–18: obscene words were proscribed, as well as explicit descriptions of sexual acts. Of course, it is quite difficult to establish how far an author could really go in his descriptions. Richlin's information is mentioned by Gauly 2004, 129 n. 174 as an argument for the idea that Seneca's description of vice defeats his moral aims.

are varied, the accent lies on his submission (*patientia*) (1.16.2, 4, 5, 7, 9).[20] It is well known that the passive (or 'pathic') role in sexual relationships was considered to place someone in an inferior position.[21] This restricts the range of evaluations of Hostius' deeds open to the reader. Another interesting and somewhat intriguing aspect of the narrative is formed by the terms that are used by Hostius himself to refer to his activities: he speaks of his 'sick wants' (*morbo meo*, 16.8), his depravity (*nequitiam meam*, 1.16.8), his obscenity (*obscenitas mea*, 16.9, a term also used by Seneca in §§1 and 6), and the sexual abuse he commits (*stuprum*, 1.16.7).[22]

Besides repetition, Hostius Quadra's deeds are also emphasized by another well-known rhetorical device, indirect amplification.[23] Hostius is represented as even more shameless than those best known for their lack of *pudor*. In 1.16.4 Seneca states that even in corrupt persons exposed to every kind of disgrace there is a modesty of the eyes; Hostius lacks such modesty. In 1.16.6 Seneca compares him with prostitutes: prostitutes conceal what they do, while Hostius makes a spectacle of it. The comparison of great villains with prostitutes (to the advantage of the latter) also occurs elsewhere in Latin literature.[24] Thus, Seneca uses a recognized literary means to emphasize Hostius Quadra's vice.

The scandalous character of Hostius Quadra's deeds is related to the idea that shameful acts are usually committed in the dark, in secret, while Hostius prefers broad daylight (§§3, 4, 5). The fact that he watches what he is doing is mentioned repeatedly. As has been remarked, there is an accumulation of vocabulary pertaining to the faculty of sight in this chapter.[25] Emphasis is put on the idea that Hostius' vice forms a spectacle he enjoys: 'mirrors faced him on all sides in order that he might be a spectator of his own shame' (*illi specula ab omni parte opponerentur ut ipse flagitiorum suorum spectator esset*).[26]

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[20] Cf. Bartsch 2006, 107 ('he plays both the passive and (possibly) the active part'), with n. 163.

[21] See, e.g., Richlin 1983, 226 (with reference to Hostius), Walters 1998, 359 ff., with further references to modern scholarship. Gauly 2004 uses this aspect to argue for an interpretation of the *fabella* in terms of social symbolism.

[22] Cf. Citroni Marchetti 1991, 157 on *morbo meo*. This negative term is more usual in descriptions of vice from a moralizing point of view.

[23] On amplification see Quintilian 8.4; for modern scholarship, see Lausberg 1973, *s.v. amplificatio*.

[24] See Martial 1.34.5–8, Ovid *Amores* 3.14.7 ff., Juvenal 11.171 ff.

[25] See Berno 2002, 217–218, with reference to Solimano 1991, 78; Citroni Marchetti 1991, 157 ff. (cf. her index *s.v.* 'sguardo').

[26] 1.16.3, see also in §5 the repetition of *spectabat*, §6 'that monster had made a

Enjoying one's vice through the eyes is represented as a further degree in viciousness (1.16.3 '… he not only presented to his mouth but to his eyes as well').[27]

Exceptionally vicious persons are described more often as disregarding the 'norm' of committing vicious deeds in secret. In the *Pro Caelio*, for instance, Cicero describes Clodia in this way (*Cael.* 47):

> They proclaim that the lust of that one woman is so headlong that she not only does not seek solitude, and darkness, and the usual concealments of wickedness, but even while behaving in the most shameless manner, exults in the presence of the most numerous crowd, and in the broadest daylight.[28]
>
> illae vero non loquuntur solum, verum etiam personant, huc unius mulieris libidinem esse prolapsam ut ea non modo solitudinem ac tenebras atque haec flagitiorum integumenta non quaerat, sed in turpissimis rebus frequentissima celebritate et clarissima luce laetetur.

The parallel with Hostius is clear.

Thus, Seneca uses several rhetorical means to emphasize Hostius Quadra's vice. One could say that the text functions as one of Hostius' enlarging mirrors.[29] Or, as Lessing said: '[Seneca] … giebt sich alle Mühe die Augen seiner Leser auf diesen Gegenstand recht zu heften'. Indeed, Seneca draws the attention to the horrid deed. Lessing adds: 'Mann sollte schwören, er rede von dem freywilligen Tode des Cato, so feurig wird er dabey!'[30] The comparison with Cato, represented in Seneca's work as a positive *exemplum*, is interesting: it points in the direction of my interpretation of the passage.

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spectacle of his own obscenity'. Regarding the enactment of a spectacle by Hostius, one may also think of the low status of those who participated in a spectacle, such as actors and gladiators. This aspect is developed by Walters 1998, 363–364, who discusses Juvenal's second satire. Satire forms an important parallel genre for Seneca's descriptions of vice.

[27] Cf. *NQ* 3.18.7, with Citroni Marchetti 1991, 165.

[28] Cf. also the texts mentioned in n. 24 above: the idea of a shameless, unconcealed vice often occurs together with a comparison (and contrast) with prostitutes. For further parallels, see Vottero's edition of the *Naturales Quaestiones*, nn. 18 and 19 *ad loc*, and Walters 1998, 363.

[29] Compare Williams' remark that the language of 16.1 contains its own mirrorings and distortions (2005, 146: he points to such word play as the description of Hostius as 'a slave of his money' who was 'killed by his slaves').

[30] As quoted by Gauly 2004, 128: G.E. Lessing, 'Rettungen des Horaz', in: *Sämtliche Schriften*, ed. K. Lachmann, 3. […] edition in care of F. Muncker, vol. 5, Stuttgart 1890, 280.

4. *The role of the representation of vice*

A few passages in Seneca's work provide an indication for the philosophical context in which such an elaborate description of evil may be understood. Most interesting is a passage from *de Ira* (3.5.3), in which the thorough examination and representation of evil is presented as a method to combat such evil. Seneca explains how one should proceed to keep anger away:

> We shall forestall the possibility of anger if we repeatedly set before ourselves its many faults and rightly appraise it. We must charge it and convict it; we must carefully examine its evils and reveal them.
>
> ne irascamur praestabimus, si omnia uitia irae nobis subinde proposuerimus et illam bene aestimauerimus. accusanda est apud nos, damnanda; perscrutanda eius mala et in medium protrahenda sunt.

The idea of revealing or 'bringing into the open' (*in medium protrahere*) the many evils of a vice also occurs in *de Tranquillitate Animi* 2.5. In this passage, too, Seneca mentions the utility of the portrayal of vice. The vice under discussion (i.e., the contrary of *tranquillitas animi*) must be wholly revealed, so that everyone may recognize his own form of vice (and avoid or remedy it, we must understand).[31]

The idea that it is also the task of the philosopher to give representations of vice (besides representations of virtue) has been formulated by I. Hadot in her study *Seneca und die griechisch-römische Tradition der Seelenleitung*. Hadot says:

> Man hat ihr Erscheinungsbild [of the 'seelische Krankheiten'] genau zu studieren, und dies mit einem doppelten Zweck: Einmal muß man seine Fehler, um sie beseitigen zu können, genau kennen, zum andern trägt es schon viel zu ihrer Vermeidung bei, wenn man sich ihrer Häßlichkeit bewußt wird. So gehört die manchmal ausgedehnte, manchmal kurze Schilderung von seelischen Krankheitzuständen mit zu den Aufgaben und Zielen des Seelenleiters, wie umgekert auch die als Ansporn dienende Beschreibung von Erscheinungsbildern der Tugend.[32]

One should study the appearance, the ugliness of moral faults, to be able to combat and prevent them. Thus, the philosopher must give

[31] *Tranq. An.* 2.5: 'Meanwhile we must reveal the whole of the vice, and each one will then recognize his own share of it' (*Totum interim uitium in medium protrahendum est, ex quo agnoscet quisque partem suam*). Different forms of unrest are described in the text.

[32] 1969, 119–120. In a note, she refers to the passage from *de Tranquillitate Animi* just mentioned.

descriptions of vice, to dissuade from such vice, just as he pictures virtue, to exhort his students. These descriptions may be short, but also more extended.

In the passage of *de Ira*, Seneca speaks about *repeatedly* setting the many faults of anger before one's eyes. Full assimilation of knowledge is achieved only through repetition and meditation. It is not enough to have heard or read some moral rule: one must come to live in accordance with it. This may be brought about through 'spiritual exercises'[33] with a strong rhetorical aspect.[34]

To clarify the reference to spiritual exercises, let me make a comparison with the relatively well-known exercise of *praemeditatio futurorum malorum*.[35] This exercise consisted in familiarizing oneself in one's imagination with future evils, especially death, by representing such evils to oneself, to improve one's attitude to them when they finally occurred. The *praemeditatio* was used by different philosophical schools in antiquity, the Stoics among them, and it also appears in Seneca's work, for instance in *Epistulae Morales* (*Ep.*) 91. This letter, a reaction to the fire that destroyed the city of Lyons, begins with a description of that fire as the greatest that ever occurred. It was also an unexpected catastrophe; the unexpected, Seneca states, is more fearsome. Therefore, one should foresee everything and not only think about what usually happens, but also about what may happen (*in omnia praemittendus animus*, *Ep.* 91.3–4). Different disasters that may befall human beings are summed up (*Ep.* 91.4–8). The passage is concluded with an injunction to meditate on all such disasters (*exilia, tormenta morbi … meditare*) and the remark (*Ep.* 91.8):

> Let us place before our eyes in its entirety the nature of man's lot, and if we do not want to be overwhelmed, or even dazed, by those unusual evils, as if they were novel, let us anticipate, not the evil that often happens, but all that can possibly happen. We must reflect upon fortune fully and completely.

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[33] Besides the already quoted study of I. Hadot (1969), this subject is discussed by Rabbow 1954 and P. Hadot 1995 and 2002; see also Newman 1989.

[34] See P. Hadot 1995, 21, 85; 2002, 28, with reference to Rabbow 1954, 55–90, I. Hadot 1969, 184, Hijmans 1959, 89.

[35] On the subject, see Rabbow 1954, 160ff., van Dijk 1968, 155–157, Armisen-Marchetti 1986 and Manning 1976. Both Armisen-Marchetti and Manning discuss the problematic fact that in Seneca's work, beside the idea of *praemeditatio*, we also find thoughts that rather belong to the Epicurean sphere and seem to deny the *praemeditatio*. They also offer a short history of this exercise, which was primarily used by the Cyrenaics, but also by the Stoics: see Cicero, *Tusc.* 3.28–29 and 3.52. Compare further Newman 1989, 177–178.

> tota ante oculos sortis humanae condicio ponatur, nec quantum frequenter evenit sed quantum plurimum potest evenire praesumamus animo si nolumus opprimi nec illis inusitatis velut novis obstupefieri; in plenum cogitanda fortuna est.

In the next paragraphs, one example of a catastrophe that did (and may again) happen is developed at greater length.

The idea of 'placing before one's eyes' possible evils, mentioned in *Ep.* 91.8, corresponds to the unveiling of vice prescribed in the passages from *de Ira* and *de Tranquillitate Animi* quoted above.[36] It also corresponds to the use of rhetorical *evidentia*, as we found it in the representation of Hostius Quadra's vice. Armisen-Marchetti, who mentions *Ep.* 91 in the context of a discussion of the *praemeditatio*, argues that Seneca gives an example of this exercise in the letter, when he lists different disasters that may occur. This example, she adds, has a rhetorical rather than a philosophical character: instead of mentioning the concept of *indifferentia*, Seneca 'describes, and only describes' (with much use of rhetoric) the disasters that may occur.[37] This remark is interesting, since it corresponds to the preference for (mere) descriptions of vice one encounters in the *Naturales Quaestiones*. In the first series of possible disasters mentioned in *Ep.* 91 (§§4–8), different disasters are summed up, but in the second passage (§§9ff.) one case is developed at greater length. We here find confirmation for the idea that the Hostius Quadra account may be understood in the context of moral philosophy—and an indication of the kind of philosophical context in which it may be understood.

5. NQ *1.16 and the prefaces and epilogues of the* Naturales Quaestiones

For a good understanding of the account of Hostius Quadra's vicious behavior, we should also consider the context provided for this text by the other prefaces and epilogues of the *Naturales Quaestiones*, since that work contains other descriptions of human badness. In the last chapter

[36] For the visualization of what should be avoided and what should be pursued, see also P. Hadot 1995, 85; 2002, 28. Compare Rabbow 1954, 72ff., 330 (with reference to the rhetorical technique of *evidentia*), I. Hadot 1992, 19.

[37] 1986, 188–189. For the idea of (pre)meditation on death Armisen-Marchetti also refers to *NQ* 6.32.12. Compare also Viti 1997, 406 n. 35. It must be added, however, that it is difficult to ascertain to what extent ancient texts contain (written) 'spiritual exercises'. On the matter, compare Newman 1989.

of Book 4b, for instance, Seneca gives a lengthy description of the habit to ingest snow at luxurious dinner parties. In the last chapter of Book 5, he vituperates against man's habit to misuse navigation for the purpose of waging war in other countries. The idea of man's misuse of an object that had been put at his disposal for other purposes, a moralistic motif that occurs more often in Latin literature, is common to these descriptions.[38] In addition to these negative descriptions an exhortation to virtue is given in the preface of Book 3, and some *consolationes* for the fear of dying due to a natural phenomenon occur in Books 2 and 6.

In one of his *Epistulae Morales*, letter 94, Seneca argues for the usefulness of the parenetic part of philosophy (*pars praeceptiva*). In the course of this argument, he mentions that subdivisions of this part of philosophy, the genres of *adhortatio*, *dissuasio*, *obiurgatio* and *consolatio*, are also considered useful.[39] In my opinion, this provides us with information about the philosophical context in which the prefaces and epilogues of the *Naturales Quaestiones* belong (the case of the *consolationes* is particularly clear). It seems that we should understand these texts as parenetic passages. As is described in letter 94, the aim of the parenetic part of philosophy is to admonish, to repeat well-known information so that one may fully assimilate it, and improve one's manner of living (*Ep.* 94.25 ff., cf. § 21). The text-form best suited to this goal is a forceful one that impresses a message on the student, with much repetition. This information about the nature of prefaces and epilogues of the *Naturales Quaestiones* confirms, I believe, that we should understand the description of Hostius Quadra's misdeeds as apotreptic teaching, as an *obiurgatio*.

The preface of *NQ* Book 6, which proclaims to provide consolation for the fear of dying in an earthquake, contains an elaborate description of the dangerous character of this natural catastrophe. Earthquakes are represented as the most terrifying kind of disaster: they are worse than other forms of destruction, and reveal the instability of the most stable thing, the earth itself (6.1.4–7; compare the description of the fire of Lyons in *Ep.* 91.1–2, as mentioned earlier). Earthquakes also occur everywhere, and at every moment (6.1.10 ff.). In this passage, we

[38] For this moralistic motif, see Citroni Marchetti 1991, index *s.v.* 'oggetti'.

[39] *Ep.* 94.21, 39, 49, cf. *Ep.* 95.34, 65. The terms *exhortatio* and *laudatio* are also mentioned. *Obiurgatio*, *cohortatio*, and *consolatio* also occur together in Cicero, *de Oratore* 2.50. On these passages and terms in *Ep.* 94–95, see also Garbarino 1982, 6 ff., who points out that these kinds of speech, which Seneca attributes to the philosopher, are attributed by Cicero to the orator.

clearly find the same emphatic kind of description as in the Hostius Quadra account, with the same seemingly illogical character: just as Seneca describes with much gusto the vice that must be avoided, so he emphasizes the fearful character of the phenomenon for which he is supposed to offer consolation (as he admits in *NQ* 6.2.1). This parallel has its limits, however. Indeed, the role of the amplification of the disaster in *NQ* 6 is clearer than that of the description of vice in *NQ* 1.16: the initial amplification of the disaster for which consolation is offered is part of the consolatory procedure. The realization that earthquakes may appear at any moment or time is explicitly said to be supposed to help combat one's fear of earthquakes: another instance of *praemeditatio futurorum malorum*.[40]

6. *Conclusion*

In this chapter I have argued, along with other scholars, that the elaborate representation of Hostius Quadra's vice is functional. I have given some evidence for a didactic *intent* of the account of Hostius Quadra's vice, and thereby placed the passage in the context of Seneca's moral work. My interpretation has the advantage of corresponding to Seneca's announcement of the purpose of the passage in *NQ* 1.16.1 (making it unnecessary to regard it as the 'alleged purpose' of the passage). Thus, as it seems to me, this reading should certainly be retained alongside interpretations of the passage that proceed from other premises than that of authorial intentionality. Moreover, this reading is not incompatible with interpretations that place the description of Hostius Quadra's vice in the context of *Naturales Quaestiones* Book 1. I hope, however, to have shown that to interpret the account as a 'mere' condemnation of vice presents interesting possibilities, too.

This approach falls within a long scholarly tradition about Seneca's negative moral *exempla*,[41] and it is one that has also been applied to Seneca's tragedies, which feature characters whose degree of wicked-

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[40] For further discussion of the preface of *NQ* 6, I refer to my study on the prefaces and epilogues of the *Naturales Quaestiones* (Limburg 2007).

[41] On *exempla* in Seneca see, e.g., Kühnen 1962, 39ff. and Mayer's survey of Roman historical *exempla* in Seneca, 1991, 141–176. Mayer also discusses *exempla fugienda* (1991, 144, 145, 163–164), and refers to Hostius Quadra in this context. According to Kühnen 1962, 48, Seneca has a 'zweispältige Haltung' towards negative *exempla*: besides *de Ira* 3.22.1 (*et haec cogitanda sunt exempla quae vites et illa ex contrario quae sequaris*), he points to

ness may be compared to that of Hostius Quadra.[42] The idea that the 'monsters' of Senecan tragedy form negative *exempla* that need to be understood in a Stoic context has not been universally accepted. The situations and characters in the tragedies cannot be reduced to unequivocal moral lessons. It has also been argued that the tragedies form a negation of Stoic doctrines—just as the account of Hostius Quadra's vice has been thought to deny Seneca's moral teaching.[43]

In an interesting discussion of the impossibility of Senecan tragedy, Schiesaro argues that it is inherent to a (good) tragedy to display conflicting forces with their full force, leaving it to the audience to draw their own lessons. Although in principle, from an educational point of view, the audience will be repelled by 'bad' examples and incited by 'good' ones, there is nothing to guarantee that the opposite effect will not be achieved. Thus, this procedure involves considerable risks.[44] Hence the 'impossibility' of writing tragedy from a Stoic point of view, since the tragedian will be unable to control the moral lesson of the tragedies.

Ep. 104.21, where Seneca says that anyone who wishes to avoid vice should stay far away from examples of evil.

[42] Berno 2003, 55–58 compares Hostius to several tragic characters and mentions that the same inversion of values as is found in Hostius' behavior has been argued to play a role in Senecan drama. Leitão 1998, 128 begins his discussion of *NQ* 1 with a reference to Senecan tragedy: 'the usual explanation is that the gruesome scenes and figures provide negative moral *exempla*: they teach us the right way through their example of the opposite'. Pratt 1983 offers a good example of the explanation of the occurrence of evil in Seneca's tragedies with reference to the notion of negative *exempla* (he gives a general introduction, including a survey of the evolution of the idea up to his time [1983, 72–81], followed by an application to the different tragedies).

[43] See Schiesaro 1997, 109, 110, who rejects this idea, Boyle 1997, 32–33, with reference to Dingel 1974, 72, Hine 2003, 173–174, 201ff. Hine's article mentions and discusses the different positions on the Stoic value of the tragedies. Hine himself argues that the plays do invite moral debate, but not necessarily Stoic conclusions.

[44] 1997, 109–111. Compare Hine 2003, 190, Leitão 1998, 128 ('if the grotesque and perverse in Senecan tragedy is meant to teach in this way (and I have my doubts), it is an inherently dangerous strategy, for the "student" could just as easily develop a fascination for the perversions he sees or reads as feel repugnance for them'). With regard to Juvenal's second satire, Walters 1998, 363–364 also argues that satire provides a 'safe' pleasure for the reader in enjoying representations of vice while disapproving of the vice. Schiesaro further argues that, since 'the real burden of interpretation falls on the audience' and lies beyond the influence of the author, authorial intentions become irrelevant to the interpretation (1997, 107, 109). In this chapter, I have taken the view that an interpretation of *NQ* 1.16 in the context of authorial intention retains relevance and interest.

Seneca's descriptions of vice, whether in the tragedies or in the *Naturales Quaestiones*, may well have distressed some readers. I have provided evidence for a didactic intent of *NQ* 1.16, but the lesson need not have been effective. Thus, it is also quite possible that readers were enticed rather than deterred by the description of Hostius' vice. In this sense, the lengthy description of vice could indeed be said to undermine Seneca's lesson. The fact remains, however, that the description of Hostius Quadra's vice corresponds to a certain form of moral teaching that is traceable to Seneca's work and time. The parenetic genre to which I have argued *NQ* 1.16 belongs allows, in the end, for less ambiguity than the genre of tragedy. I have made a brief comparison with the consolatory texts of the *Naturales Quaestiones*: the *consolatio*, too, was found problematic already in antiquity—it was said in particular to be ineffective against the fear of death. Some also thought it an unworthy procedure to adduce other people's miseries as consolation for one's own.[45] Despite this criticism, however, consolations continued to be written. In a similar way, we should at least entertain the possibility that the account of Hostius Quadra's vice may have been a sample of moral apotreptic teaching, meant to warn against behavior that was genuinely repudiated.

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[45] See Cicero, *Tusc.* 3.55, 59–60, 73; cf. Seneca's *ad Marciam* 12.5.

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CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

NATURE'S MONSTER: CALIGULA AS *EXEMPLUM* IN SENECA'S *DIALOGUES*

Amanda Wilcox

> *Vice* (ἡ κακία) *is peculiarly distinguished from dreadful accidents, for even taken in itself it does in a sense come about in accordance with the reason of nature and, if I may put it so, its genesis is not useless in relation to the universe as a whole, since otherwise the good would not exist either.*
>
> Chrysippus, *On Nature* [Plut. *de Stoic. Rep.* 1050F = Plut. *Comm. Not.* 1065A–B = *SVF* 2.1181]

1. *Introduction*

When Gaius Caesar, popularly known as Caligula, succeeded his uncle Tiberius in 37 CE, the initial reaction of the Roman senate and people seems to have been relief. Cassius Dio records that (59.6.1):

> [H]e at first showed great deference to the senators on an occasion when knights and also some of the populace were present at their meeting. He promised to share his power with them and to do whatever would please them, calling himself their son and ward.[1]
>
> πρῶτον μὲν τοὺς βουλευτάς, παρόντων ἐν τῷ συνεδρίῳ καὶ ἱππέων τοῦ τε δήμου τινῶν, πολλὰ ἐκολάκευσε, τήν τε γὰρ ἀρχὴν κοινώσειν σφίσι καὶ πάνθ' ὅσα ἂν καὶ ἐκείνοις ἀρέσῃ ποιήσειν ὑπέσχετο, καὶ υἱὸς καὶ τρόφιμος αὐτῶν λέγων εἶναι.

But within seven months of his accession, Gaius fell ill. According to Philo, he emerged from convalescence permanently transformed, or perhaps revealed for what he really already was (*Legatio ad Gaium* 22):

[1] Translations of Seneca are my own. Translations of other ancient authors are

> Within a short time Gaius, who had been regarded as a savior and benefactor … began to play his master card, as the saying is, changing to brutality, or rather, openly displaying the savagery which he had concealed under a cloak of hypocrisy.
>
> εὐθὺς γοῦν οὐκ εἰς μακρὰν ὁ σωτὴρ καὶ εὐεργέτης εἶναι νομισθεὶς … ἤρξατο μεταβαλὼν πρὸς τὸ ἀτίθασον, μᾶλλον δὲ ἣν συνεσκίαζεν ἀγριότητα τῷ πλάσματι τῆς ὑποκρίσεως ἀναφήνας.

Suetonius divides his *Life* of Gaius into two parts. As transition from the first of these to the second, he writes (22.1): 'So much for the princeps, the rest of this history must tell about a monster' (*hactenus quasi de principe, reliqua ut de monstro narranda sunt*). It appears that from promising beginnings, Gaius' reign quickly deteriorated. An alarming cycle of assassinations, spending sprees, and bizarre religious innovations requiring ever more extravagant spending began. Expensive adventures such as a military campaign to Britain that were taken up and abruptly abandoned led to ever more dire fiscal straits. Inconsistency and uncertainty were hallmarks of Gaius' reign. In January of 41, having alienated the senate and offended the praetorian guard, he was assassinated. Ancient sources for his rule are uniformly hostile. Consequently, a negative depiction of Gaius in the post-Gaian works of Seneca the Younger, who entered the senate late in Tiberius' reign, comes as no surprise.[2] Yet the sheer frequency with which Gaius appears in these works is noteworthy: he features in eight of Seneca's twelve *Dialogi* as an exemplar of vice.

Miriam Griffin has observed that Seneca had a good reason for his frequent recourse to Gaius, as '[he] was a flamboyant Princeps who met a satisfactorily violent end, thus an ideal subject for a moralist' (1976, 214). It is true that Gaius' biography is a rich repository of anecdotes for both entertainers and moralists; the outrageous actions and sayings attributed to him make for vivid, memorable reading. In this chapter, I offer a more detailed assessment of the use to which Seneca puts Gaius in his dialogues than has been previously attempted. I do so, first, to show that Gaius' badness matters for our evaluation of Senecan philosophy. I contend that Seneca's representation of Gaius

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from the Loeb series, with the exception of Philo, who is quoted from the translation by E.M. Smallwood.

[2] Clarke 1965 provides an overview of the Roman historical sources about Seneca under Caligula, including Dio's report that Gaius, jealous of Seneca's oratorical prowess, ordered Seneca to kill himself (59.19.7–8). For the date and circumstances of Seneca's entry into the senate, see Griffin 1976, 43–50.

makes a contribution to his moral epistemology, as well as serving the therapeutic aims of Senecan ethics (sections 2 and 3). Moreover, when we read Seneca's Gaian *exempla* against a backdrop of Stoic providence, these stories offer more subtle philosophical lessons for their readers than the traditional moral instruction enshrined in, for instance, the *exempla* of Valerius Maximus. In Seneca vice turns into the unexpected inspiration and occasion for supremely virtuous behavior (section 4). Section 5 considers how Seneca's pervasively ironic style of writing enriches the moral message of these *exempla* and hints at a cosmological justification for Gaius' existence. The operation of irony in these stories suggests that the monstrously wicked emperor Gaius may be a natural rather than moral evil, which is to say, given the Stoic conception of a providential universe, in truth not an evil at all.[3] Moreover, Gaius' vulnerability to divinely controlled irony, which the stories repeatedly stress, implicitly counsels the reader to resign him or herself to possessing only limited control over irony in his or her own life.

2. *Senecan epistemology and ethics*

To understand how Seneca employs Gaius as an exemplar of vice, it will be helpful to review in brief his opposite number, the Stoic sage, who exemplifies Stoic virtue and the happy life.[4] The Stoics considered virtue sufficient for happiness, and believed that virtue is a stable disposition, that is, a virtuous person is not virtuous at one moment and not virtuous at the next, but virtuous at all times. Nonetheless, the virtuous person exercises her virtue by constantly making the right moral choices. The Stoics also held that wisdom is co-identical with virtue, so the person who is happy because she is virtuous is also wise (*sapiens*).[5] The Stoics did not agree whether a true wise person, or sage, had

[3] Long 1968, 333: 'The Stoic sees sufficient evidence of a benevolently ordered world to accept cosmic evil as something which eventually, if not now, will prove to have been useful to the whole'. Thus, 'cosmic evil turns out … to be a red herring … and therefore not inconsistent with the assertion that "moral badness is the only *kakon*"'.

[4] The following section is greatly indebted to Brad Inwood's essay 'Getting to Goodness' (2005, 271–301) on the role of the sage in Senecan moral epistemology for concept acquisition and formation, and in particular, for the idea of the good.

[5] These two tenets of Stoic ethics and epistemology (virtue is sufficient for happiness; virtue is co-identical with wisdom) were shared with other Socratic schools; on the

ever existed, although Socrates was thought possibly to have been one, and in Seneca's eyes, Cato the Younger was another candidate. In spite of this discouraging record of actual virtue-attainment, the Stoics held that aspirants to virtue should train themselves to make more and more right moral choices, in the hope that making right choices eventually would transform their disposition from vicious to virtuous; thus, they would become truly wise and happy.[6]

Further, the Stoics believed that the happy life was a life lived in accord with nature (*kata phusin*), and they granted to Nature a large role in the realization of virtue.[7] As A.A. Long writes, 'Nature not only gives men the capacity of being good, it also *leads* men toward goodness, and goodness is the *perfection* of the individual human being's nature'.[8] Letter 120 of the *Moral Epistles* asserts that nature does not teach us directly what virtue is, but that it has given us the 'seeds' of this knowledge by giving us historical exemplars of virtue, and making us predisposed to exaggerate the praiseworthy deeds and traits of these exemplary persons and also prone to overlook their failings. As examples, Seneca mentions Horatius Cocles, who acted with outstanding courage, and Fabricius, whose incorruptible honesty and disregard for wealth made him renowned. The acts of these exemplary figures can show us what is a virtuous response to particular circumstances; thus they and other exemplary figures enable us to infer bit by bit what virtue fully realized would be (*haec et eiusmodi facta imaginem nobis ostendere virtutis*, 120.8). From these *exempla virtutis*, we are able to build up a composite image of the entirely virtuous man, and thus to envision him (120.9–11):

> We have seen one man bold in war, but fearful in the civic sphere, bearing poverty with spirit, but ill-repute badly: we have praised the deed, we have scorned the man. We have seen another man, who was kind to his friends, moderate toward his enemies, who was upright and scrupulous in dealing with his affairs, both private and public. Patience did not fail him in matters that he had to endure, prudence did not fail him in matters he had to manage. When it was time to give, we saw him

pedigree of these 'Socratic paradoxes', see Irwin 1998, 154–156. On Stoic happiness, Rist 1969, 2 summarizes: 'Happiness is … the end of life for Zeno; and happiness is to be equated with a smoothly flowing life'; see *SVF* 1.184.

[6] Progress toward virtue through practice: *SVF* 3.500, 510 and Cic. *Fin.* 3.17ff., cited by Atherton 1988, 406 n. 32. For introductions to Stoic epistemology and ethics, see respectively Hankinson 2003, 59–84, and Long 1974, 179–209.

[7] E.g., D.L. 7.87: Nature 'leads us' to virtue.

[8] Long 1968, 335; italics in original.

give generously, when it was time to work, he worked strenuously and resolutely, and relieved the fatigue of his body with his spirit. Moreover he was always the same, consistent in all his actions, not only good by means of his judgment but guided by habit to such an extent that he not only was able to act rightly, but could not act, except rightly. We understand that in this man complete virtue exists … How then have we formed this concept of virtue? The order of this man, his propriety, steadfastness, the harmony of all his actions with one another, and a greatness [of spirit] that lifts itself above all have shown it to us. From this we understand the happy life, flowing with favorable course, entirely under its own control.

hunc vidimus in bello fortem, in foro timidum, animose paupertatem ferentem, humiliter infamiam: factum laudavimus, contempsimus virum. alium vidimus adversus amicos benignum, adversus inimicos temperatum, et publica et privata sancte ac religiose administrantem; non deesse ei in iis quae toleranda erant patientiam, in iis quae agenda prudentiam. vidimus ubi tribuendum esset plena manu dantem, ubi laborandum, pertinacem et obnixum et lassitudinem corporis animo sublevantem. praeterea idem erat semper et in omni actu per sibi, iam non consilio bonus, sed more eo perductus ut non tantum recte facere posset, sed nisi recte facere non posset. intelleximus in illo perfectam esse virtutem … ex quo ergo virtutem intelleximus? ostendit illam nobis ordo eius et decor et constantia et omnium inter se actionum concordia et magnitudo super omnia efferens sese. hinc intellecta est illa beata vita secundo defluens cursu, arbitrii sui tota.

By envisioning a person whose virtue is complete, who is entirely consistent, and thus invulnerable to circumstance, Seneca has in essence described the sage, although the term *sapiens* does not occur until the letter's final section: 'Except for the sage, no one acts one single role; the rest of us are multiform' (*praeter sapientem autem nemo unum agit, ceteri multiformes sumus*).[9]

Recently, Brad Inwood has used *Moral Epistle* 120 to get at the part played by the sage in Seneca's moral epistemology.[10] Inwood describes the sage as not '[primarily] a direct model for imitation or analysis, but as a foil in the analytical process of concept formation … The sage is a whetstone for our analysis of moral experience, not something we are expected to grasp and use directly … This sort of sage is perhaps … part of Nature's plan for us'. In other words, descriptions of the sage are

[9] For the place of 'acting a part' in Seneca's ethical thought, see Edwards 2002, 381–387; Bartsch 2006, 208–216.

[10] Inwood 2005, 295–296.

meant only secondarily as exhortations for us to go and do likewise—their first importance lies in aiding us to understand what virtue *is*.[11]

3. *Gaius' epistemological role*

If the imagined figure of the wise man helps us to infer what goodness is, then we may well wonder if Seneca also depicts a figure symmetrical to the sage, a figure with the opposite characteristics to the wise man but a similar function, that is, a figure who embodies vice. Someone might point out that there is no need for Seneca to represent such a figure, since according to Stoicism, everyone who is not perfectly good is vicious. Therefore any ordinary agent can, and does, demonstrate vice. On the other hand, the Stoics recognized that concept formation can proceed from opposites.[12] Thus, representations of a conspicuously vicious figure could complement representations of the sage in helping us to understand what goodness is. Inwood's inquiry into the epistemological role of the sage does not explore his opposite number, the moral agent entirely governed by vice.[13] He does, however, draw attention to Seneca's remarks on the importance of negative examples (120.8): 'I will add something which may amaze you: sometimes … the best relies on its opposite' (*adiciam quod mirum fortasse videatur: … interdum … optimum ex contrario enituit*). In Letter 120, Seneca does not introduce any completely vicious character to demonstrate that we may conceive of virtue by observing its opposite, but in his *Dialogi*, a supreme exemplar of bad behavior does occur, frequently.[14] If the sage is Nature's way of teaching us what virtue is, then Gaius Caesar, as he is represented by Seneca, is

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[11] In my view, Inwood's claim that the epistemological role of the wise man is primary in Senecan philosophy is complicated by the fact that Cato and Socrates, both of whom are possible sages, play an important part in Seneca's ethical program. Both these figures appear in the *Dialogues* many times over as moral *exempla*.

[12] D.L. 7.52: 'General notions, indeed, are gained in the following ways: some by direct contact, some by resemblance, some by analogy, some by transposition, some by composition, and some by contrariety (τὰ δὲ κατ' ἐναντίωσιν)'.

[13] The likelihood of such a figure's existence may be suggested by the Stoic argument that good cannot exist without evil (Gellius, 7.1–6 = *SVF* 2.1169), on which see Hine 1995, 97–104. Inwood draws our attention to Seneca's remarks on the importance of negative examples, in particular, vices that masquerade as virtues (2005, 287–288, on *Ep.* 120.8, and n. 17, citing Pohlenz [1940, 87], who links this passage to concept formation from opposition).

[14] Some negative *exempla* lie closer to hand; by e-mail, James Ker suggests that *Ep.* 122 works out the ideas of *Ep.* 120 in a negative direction; it describes men (*lucifugae*)

Nature's way of teaching us what is vice. Seneca says as much when he introduces Gaius in his *Consolation for Polybius* (17.3–6):[15]

> I am not able, while I make the rounds of all the Caesars whose brothers and sisters were snatched away by fortune, to overlook this man, picked out from the ranks of Caesars, whom nature produced for the destruction and the censure of the human race … When Gaius Caesar lost his sister Drusilla, this man, who was no more able to grieve than to rejoice in princely fashion, fled the sight and the society of his citizens … This same Gaius, with frenzied inconsistency, now allowing his beard and hair to grow unchecked, now wandering, traversing the shores of Italy and Sicily, was never quite certain whether he wished his sister to be mourned or worshiped … [H]e bore the blows of misfortune with the same excess of spirit by which he was swollen up beyond human measure, when he was elated by prosperity.
>
> non possum tamen, cum omnes circumierim Caesares, quibus fortuna fratres sororesque eripuit, hunc praeterire ex omni Caesarum numero excerpendum, quem rerum natura in exitium opprobriumque humani generis edidit … C. Caesar amissa sorore Drusilla, is homo, qui non magis dolere quam gaudere principaliter posset, conspectum conversationemque civium suorum profugit … idem ille Gaius furiosa inconstantia modo barbam capillumque summittens modo Italiae ac Siciliae oras errabundus permetiens et numquam satis certus utrum lugeri vellet an coli sororem … eadem enim intemperie animi adversarum rerum ictus ferebat qua secundarum elatus eventu super humanum intumescebat modum.

Gaius picks up and discards various activities and attitudes instead of consistently acting one part. His inconsistent actions, erratic motions, and indecisiveness all embody what Cicero reports as the Stoics' definition of vice, a 'condition or state of being inconsistent and in disagreement with oneself in one's whole life' (*habitus aut adfectio in tota vita inconstans et a se ipsa dissentiens*, *Tusc.* 4.29). Yet Seneca specifies that Gaius responds to misfortune with the same (*eadem*) excess of emotion with which he greeted good fortune. Whereas the wise man described in Letter 120 is marked out by his total consistency (*idem erat semper*), Seneca says that this same (*idem*) Gaius acts with frenzied inconsistency (*furiosa inconstantia*).[16] In fact, Seneca's description of Gaius suggests that

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who systematically oppose nature by pursuing a lifestyle of thoroughgoing nocturnal luxury; see Ker 2004, 219–221.

[15] Cf. the similar description of Gaius' behavior on this occasion in Suet. *Calig.* 24.2.

[16] And later in this letter (120.19): 'When we see someone of this consistency, does the appearance of this unusual disposition not strike us? Especially if, as I have said, uniformity shows that this is true greatness' (*cum aliquem huius videremus constantiae, quidni*

his vicious disposition is symmetrical to that of the sage; while all the actions of the sage are always consistent with one another, the actions of Gaius are all inconsistent. In another dialogue, recounting that Gaius had spent ten million sesterces on one meal, Seneca characterizes him similarly, as a person (*Helv.* 10.4):

> whom Nature seems to have produced to show what the greatest vices are capable of when joined with the greatest wealth and power.
>
> quem mihi videtur rerum natura edidisse ut ostenderet quid summa vitia in summa fortuna possent.

Gaius' absolute power and wealth enable him to express his vices on an enormous scale, but Seneca suggests that he is *inevitably* vicious as well as hugely so. In both these passages, Seneca credits Nature with the creation of Gaius: *quem mihi videtur rerum natura edidisse* in the second passage, and the stronger assertion, *quem rerum natura … edidit*, in the first. These comments may be more than a rhetorically convenient formula. Gaius' badness is philosophically useful, and so may well be providential. As a ready example of a completely vicious person, Gaius serves Senecan epistemology: the perfect negative helps us to conceive of its opposite, that is, the wise man. And even we, the non-wise, recognize badness when we see it. Thus, to borrow Inwood's words, Gaius provides a 'foil' and 'whetstone' for concept formation. Moreover, if the elusiveness of an actual, historical wise person was felt to be dispiriting, it might be mitigated by the identification of an historical exemplar of perfect vice. Gaius was supremely bad but he was undeniably real, a fact which might suggest that a supremely good person, the sage, could also exist.

The Gaian *exempla* serve a clarifying purpose in Senecan epistemology, helping to evoke the sage by embodying his opposite, and thus helping the student of Senecan Stoicism to form a notion of what goodness itself is like. This epistemological role complements Seneca's more traditional use of *exempla*, that is, as an element of ethical discourse, in which historical and mythical examples worked both as illustrations and injunctions.[17] We can expect to find didactic and therapeutic dimensions to Seneca's Gaian *exempla.* But it may not be immediately

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subiret nos species non usitatae indolis? utique si hanc, ut dixi, magnitudinem veram esse ostendebat aequalitas).

[17] On the traditional use of *exempla*, see, e.g., Shelton 1995, 160: 'Romans had long been inclined to view historical situations and personalities as object lessons, and … they preferred empirical to speculative arguments'.

clear how Gaius, the perfect exemplar of vice, contributes practically to Senecan teachings on virtue, even though we anticipate that he will. Gaius is not illustrative of virtue; he provides no positive examples for behavior that other moral persons should imitate. Nonetheless, Gaius' appearances do contribute to Seneca's ethical aims. First, Gaius' vice produces virtue in others; he provokes his victims to commit positive exemplary acts. Second, Gaius' love of irony and his absolute confidence in himself as arbiter of the ironic enable Seneca to comment on the radical contingency of human perception and control of irony, in comparison with the totalizing perspective and control that Nature, or Fate, has.[18]

4. *Vice as the provocation for virtue*

In a fundamental article on 'the socioethical dynamics of [ancient Roman] exemplarity', Matthew Roller has shown that imitation is an essential element of exemplary discourse. Both primary and secondary audiences of an exemplary deed are counseled 'to strive to replicate or surpass the deed … to win similar renown and related social capital—or, for negative examples, to avoid replicating an infamous deed' (2004, 5). Further, Roller argues persuasively that 'one particularly important end of exemplary discourse … is to authorize and promote certain patterns of action … Within exemplary discourse, "imitation" entails the production of a (new) action in the public eye in light of a previous deed *it resembles in some way*' (2004, 23; italics added). I am substantially in agreement with Roller's characterizations of exemplary discourse. Nonetheless, an analysis of Seneca's Gaius *exempla* presents some challenges to the canons of exemplarity that Roller has articulated.[19] For instance, it might be simplest to categorize Gaius as an inevitably neg-

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[18] On the identity of fate, providence, and nature in Stoicism, see Bobzien 1998, 45–47, with references.

[19] Roller argues that Seneca's *exempla* are non-standard, and deliberately so: [The representation of Horatius in *Ep.* 120 as a 'one-deed marvel'] 'is part of a larger Senecan project to offer theorized Stoicism, *in place of traditional ethics*, as a means by which Roman elites may address certain ethical binds imposed by the emerging imperial regime' (2004, 24; italics added). I differ from Roller in suspecting that the ethical program Seneca is working out in the dialogues and letters is intended to be more complementary than opposed to traditional Roman *mores*. But for present purposes, what matters is that the elements of exemplary discourse that Roller has observed in other Roman sources *are* in fact largely applicable to Senecan *exempla*,

ative exemplar, whose outrageous vices continually yield examples of deeds that people trying to be good should not commit. But even if Seneca's readers were inclined to act as outlandishly or extravagantly as Gaius, which is a doubtful proposition in itself, vanishingly few of Seneca's readers have had the resources to imitate Gaius directly.[20] So the injunction to avoid replicating Gaius' infamous deeds either has a radically limited audience (Claudius, Nero, and other absolute rulers) or it is exceedingly insipid advice. Either alternative is unsatisfying. Instead, we may adapt Roller's general rule that '"imitation" entails the production of a (new) action … in light of a previous deed' to make it better describe Senecan exemplary discourse by adducing an alternative route for the production of new exemplary deeds. This route inverts the customary way that *exempla* work, that is, exemplary discourse may fulfill its reproductive imperative by the production of positive *exempla* out of reactions to negative acts.[21] In Senecan exemplarity, Gaius plays perhaps his most important role as a provocateur of famous deeds rather than as a negative exemplar proper. According to the stories Seneca tells, Gaius' utter badness tended to bring out the best in his victims. Thus, his vicious acts produce positive *exempla virtutis*. These virtuous reactions are celebrated by Seneca as exemplary deeds, and these deeds, in turn, are commended to his readers for imitation. Here, we will examine only one instance in which the extreme vice of Gaius produces a positive *exemplum*.[22] The episode is recounted by Seneca in *de Tranquillitate*, in which he urges his addressee Serenus to endure adversity with equanimity and to learn how to change his plans cheerfully as circumstances change. To illustrate this ability, he

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and that observing Senecan departures from the norm is productive for interpreting Seneca's aims as literary artist and philosopher.

[20] Other scholars (e.g., Too 1994) have considered to what extent Nero is the implied audience of Senecan works beyond *de Clementia*, which is addressed to him. I will not take up this issue in this chapter, except to note that both *principes* under whom Seneca wrote the *Dialogi*, Claudius and Nero, were likely among these works' original audience.

[21] On what I have called the 'reproductive imperative', see Roller 2004, 6: 'Here we perceive a cyclical dimension to exemplary discourse: deeds generate other deeds, spawning ever more audiences and monuments, in an endless loop of social reproduction'. Quintilian specifies that *exempla* may work by means of dissimilarity and contraries (5.11.5); Roller 2004, 34–35 cites a fine example of ironic imitation, taken from Cassius Dio (45.31.1), in which resemblance is achieved by symmetrical divergence of the imitator's behavior from his model.

[22] Another prime example of virtue provoked by Gaius' vice is the story of Pastor at *de Ira* 2.33. I hope to discuss it elsewhere.

tells an anecdote about Julius Canus, a man who was executed as a consequence of engaging the emperor Gaius in a prolonged dispute. Canus thanked the princeps when his death sentence was pronounced, and spent the ten days between his sentence and his execution with no sign of anxiety. When a centurion came to fetch him for execution, he was playing a Roman game of strategy (*ludus latrunculorum*).[23] He admonished his opponent not to claim falsely that he had won, and asked the centurion to witness that he was one pawn ahead. His philosophy teacher asked Canus what he was thinking about as they walked to the execution place, and Canus said he was planning how he would observe whether the soul was conscious of leaving the body as it did so. It is worth including the complete *exemplum* here (*Tranq.* 14.4–10):

> Julius Canus, an extremely great man, whom we may admire even though he was born in our own time, wrangled with Gaius for awhile. Afterward, as he was leaving, that Phalaris said to him 'So that you not cherish some useless hope, I have ordered that you be led away [for execution]'. Canus said 'Thank you, excellent prince'. I am unsure what he meant; for many meanings occur to me. Did he wish to be insulting and to show that Gaius' cruelty had been so great that death was a gift? Or did he rebuke his everyday insanity? For men whose children were killed and whose property was confiscated used to give thanks. Or did he receive [his sentence] as freedom, freely? Whatever he meant, he responded courageously. Someone may say: 'It was possible that after this Gaius would bid him live'. Canus did not fear that; in these sorts of commands, the trustworthiness of Gaius was well known. Can you believe that this man spent the ten days leading up to his punishment without any anxiety? What this man said, what he did, how calm he was is astonishing. He was playing the soldier game when a centurion who was dragging along a column of the condemned bid him also rouse himself. When he was summoned, he counted the game pieces and said to his companion, 'See that after my death you do not lie and say that you won', then, nodding to the centurion he said, 'You will be witness that I departed one piece ahead'. Do you think that Canus was alluding to the game? He was making game of it. His friends were sorrowful that they were about to lose such a man. 'Why are you mournful?' he said. 'You are inquiring into whether the soul is immortal, but I shall soon know'. Nor did he fail to seek out truth at the very end and use his own

[23] The name, 'the soldier game', is significant, for it introduces an ironic touch of *mise-en-abîme* into Canus' cool acceptance of his fate; even as he dies, Canus outmaneuvers Caligula by conforming his will to coincide with what the tyrant has commanded. On the pervasiveness and importance of Seneca's military metaphors, see Wilson 1997, 63 and n. 25, with further references. For a reconstruction of the game board and manner of play, see Austin 1934, 25–30.

death as a subject of inquiry. His household philosopher accompanied him and when they were not far off from the mound on which the daily sacrifice to Caesar, our god, used to be made, the philosopher said 'What are you thinking now, Canus? Or rather, what is your state of mind?' Canus said, 'I have resolved to observe in that most fleeting moment whether the soul will perceive that it is departing', and he promised, if he ascertained anything, to visit his friends and to indicate what is the status of souls. Hark tranquillity in the middle of the storm, hark to a soul worthy of immortality, which summons its own fate for proving truth, which when placed on the final step investigates the departing breath nor learns something right up to such a death but even from that very death. No one was a philosopher longer. A great man is not hastily abandoned, and must be spoken of with care; most outstanding citizen, great part of Gaian slaughter, we commend you to everyone's memory.

Canus Iulius, vir in primis magnus, cuius admirationi ne hoc quidem obstat quod nostro saeculo natus est, cum Gaio diu altercatus, postquam abeunti Phalaris ille dixit 'ne forte inepta spe tibi blandiaris, duci te iussi', 'gratias' inquit 'ago, optime princeps'. quid senserit dubito; multa enim mihi occurrunt. contumeliosus esse voluit et ostendere quanta crudelitas esset in qua mors beneficium erat? an exprobravit illi cotidianam dementiam?—agebant enim gratias et quorum liberi occisi et quorum bona ablata erant. an tamquam libertatem libenter accepit? quidquid est, magno animo respondit. dicet aliquis 'potuit post hoc iubere illum Gaius vivere'. non timuit hoc Canus; nota erat Gai in talibus imperiis fides. credisne illum decem medios usque ad supplicium dies sine ulla sollicitudine exegisse? verisimile non est quae vir ille dixerit, quae fecerit, quam in tranquillo fuerit. ludebat latrunculis, cum centurio agmen periturorum trahens illum quoque excitari iuberet. vocatus numeravit calculos et sodali suo 'vide' inquit 'ne post mortem meam mentiaris te vicisse'; tum annuens centurioni 'testis' inquit 'eris uno me antecedere'. lusisse tu Canum illa tabula putas? inlusit. tristes erant amici talem amissuri virum: 'quid maesti' inquit 'estis? vos quaeritis an inmortales animae sint: ego iam sciam'. nec desiit veritatem in ipso fine scrutari et ex morte sua quaestionem habere. prosequebatur illum philosophus suus nec iam procul erat tumulus in quo Caesari deo nostro fiebat cotidianum sacrum: is 'quid', inquit 'Cane, nunc cogitas? aut quae tibi mens est?' 'observare' inquit Canus 'proposui illo velocissimo momento an sensurus sit animus exire se', promisitque, si quid explorasset, circumiturum amicos et indicaturum quis esset animarum status. ecce in media tempestate tranquillitas, ecce animus aeternitate dignus, qui fatum suum in argumentum veri vocat, qui in ultimo illo gradu positus exeuntem animam percontatur nec usque ad mortem tantum sed aliquid etiam ex ipsa morte discit: nemo diutius philosophatus est. non raptim relinquetur magnus vir et cum cura dicendus: dabimus te in omnem memoriam, clarissimum caput, Gaianae cladis magna portio.

The *exemplum* opens, as is usual for Seneca, with the exemplary person's name: *Canus Iulius, vir in primis magnus*. The closing of the *exemplum* is marked by a repetition of this characterization of Canus as *vir magnus*, as well as an explicit statement of the passage's function, that is, to commemorate and enjoin further commemoration of Canus' deed.[24] Seneca does not call Canus *sapiens*; he is a great man, but not a sage.[25] Canus thus conforms neatly to the pattern Seneca mentions in *Epistle* 120. Like Horatius and Fabricius, Canus acts outstandingly virtuous at one moment, in one aspect, rather than being truly perfect in virtue. Nonetheless, Seneca's description of the calm good humor Canus displays while imprisoned is strongly reminiscent of Plato's portrayal of Socrates in *Phaedo*, particularly his depiction of Canus' cheerful interaction with the prison personnel. Canus' anticipation of personally resolving the question of the soul's immortality is also reminiscent of Plato's Socrates, and when Canus asks his friends why they are sad, he nearly quotes Socrates (*Phaedo* 117d–e). Although Seneca does not represent Canus as a Stoic sage, he makes Canus resemble Socrates, it seems to me, to balance a moral and rhetorical equation. Vice which approaches the limit of what is possible, it seems, must provoke virtue in equal and opposing measure.[26] Gaius is the limit case of negative exemplarity. Accordingly, the portrayal of Canus in this episode suggests that while an ordinary evil may produce a less remarkable virtuous reaction, a truly monstrous agent produces a reaction that is nearly sage-like.

The limits for dating *de Tranquillitate* are broad; it was written sometime after 47 but before its addressee Annaeus' death, in 62.[27] It may have been composed under either Claudius or Nero. But whether or not Seneca's first readers were likely to encounter circumstances as trying as those Canus experienced under Gaius does not determine the story's qualifications for becoming an *exemplum* or its efficacy as exem-

[24] On commemoration in exemplary discourse, Roller 2004, 5: 'Commemoration [is] not only of the action, but of its consequence to the community, and of the ethical valuation it received from its primary audience'.

[25] See *Const. Sap.* 19.3–4 for more differentiation of the post of a man vs. a wise man. Note that *Tranq.* and *Const. Sap.* have the same addressee, Annaeus Serenus. Griffin 1976, 396 tentatively places *Const. Sap.* after 47 and immediately prior to *Tranq.*

[26] This proposal for the moral and rhetorical 'laws' that govern Senecan example-making is paralleled by a rule that Muecke 1969, 32 proposes in order to explain the mechanics of irony: 'to maintain the same level of irony the degree of disparity between the ironic opposites should be in inverse proportion to the degree of confident unawareness felt by the victim or pretended by the ironist'.

[27] Giancotti 1957, 193–224; Griffin 1976, 316–317.

plary discourse. Roller (2004, 7) has shown that the facticity of exemplary deeds was negotiable; doubts about the veracity of a famous act of virtue need not diminish its power as an example. However, the dramatic possibilities that Seneca realizes in his telling of Canus' story make the narrative more inviting of interpretation, and thus a more attractive, more durable monument.[28] The extreme and extremely reliable viciousness of Gaius provided the material, and Seneca's meticulous literary craftsmanship rendered this episode and similar ones into vivid new *exempla*.[29]

5. *The control of irony*

Seneca's innovative craftsmanship of *exempla* includes his own masterly use of irony, and also a sometimes subtle critique of irony's pitfalls and limits, when wielded by human actors and authors. To approach this topic, let us turn back to Miriam Griffin's remark on what may have been Seneca's basic reason for using Gaius: 'He was a flamboyant Princeps who met a satisfactorily violent end, thus an ideal subject for a moralist'. The biographical narrative of rise and fall that Griffin's assertion sketches is quintessentially ironic: the mainspring of Gaius' rise, his absolute power, was identically the mainspring of the grand delusions that caused his fall. This irony is the core of what makes Gaius 'an ideal subject for a moralist'. Moreover, an ironic mode of moralizing is particularly suited to Stoicism, which dealt in paradoxes as a major mode of communicating ideas from the time of its founding.[30]

[28] On narratives as monuments, see Roller 2004, 5 and 10–11, n. 8 with references.

[29] Seneca's enrollment of new exemplary figures such as Canus alongside traditional *exempla* like Horatius and Fabricius testifies not only to his ingenuity, but also suggests a canny apprehension of the central role that exemplary discourse played in the creation of an authorized Roman past. For this function of exemplary discourse, see Roller 2004, 7 and *passim*; for Seneca's apprehension of it, Wilcox 2006, 88; cf. Roller 2001, 88–97.

[30] On paradoxes in Stoic teaching, see Inwood 2005, 74 with n. 40. Note that Stoic paradoxes are statements that seem impossible or nonsensical to a person who takes a conventional stance, but to a convinced Stoic they are simply statements of fact. Thus, Stoic paradoxes participate in simple corrective irony. They draw attention to an apparent conflict of appearance and reality which correct interpretation resolves. That is, they are resolved by an attitudinal reorientation on the listener's or reader's part, which reorientation reveals apparent nonsense to be true statements of how things really are.

In a study of literary irony, D.C. Muecke makes a basic distinction between simple corrective ironies and general irony. Simple irony is dual and corrective: one term of the duality immediately is seen to contradict the apparent truthfulness of the simple ironic statement, assumption, or expectation (1969, 23). General irony, on the other hand, does not invite interpretation by simple correction, and is not susceptible to easy resolution. Under the heading of general irony, Muecke places ironies of paradox, dilemma, incongruity, ironies of situation and event, the irony of self-betrayal, dramatic irony, and cosmic irony. Of course, ironies from all of these categories may occur in tandem, and instances of irony can rarely be securely recognized and labeled as entirely distinct and separable types. Nonetheless, Muecke's divisions of irony provide convenient means for parsing Seneca's innovations in exemplary discourse. All of Gaius' many ironic appearances in Seneca's *Dialogues* cannot be discussed here; however, we may be able to assess the philosophical import of the ironies that shape his Gaius *exempla* from the close examination of a few select passages. To begin with, we may note a few ironies in the Canus *exemplum* quoted above. An unnamed sympathetic person suggests to Canus that the emperor may change his mind and permit him to live; after all, the unstated assumption goes, Gaius is notoriously fickle. But Canus realizes the single exception to this rule: in the matter of death-sentences alone, Gaius sticks to his decisions (*nota erat Gai in talibus imperiis fides*). At least two kinds of simple irony are operative here. First, an ironic twist is set up by the unnamed person's correct observation of the thoroughgoing nature of Gaius' inconsistency. Working from this seemingly correct presumption, the possibility that Gaius may demonstrate an inconsistency beneficial to Canus seems entirely plausible. However, ironically, the rule of Gaius' perfect inconsistency is contravened only in the one arena in which inconsistency would benefit Canus. Importantly for Seneca's depiction of Canus as someone who displays at least temporarily the attributes of a wise man, only the unnamed interlocutor is vulnerable to the mistake of misinterpreting Gaius' inconsistency as a possible route to a beneficial outcome. Canus knows better than to fall for this trap. Simple verbal irony is also at work in the sentence that expresses Canus' knowing refusal to take the bait: *nota erat Gai in talibus imperiis fides*. Gaius' 'good faith', his *fides*, resides precisely in his predictable *bad* faith. Moreover, Seneca's use of *imperium* invites us to read the sentence sarcastically; this word properly refers to sovereignty, to the sacred right of command, but here instead it indicates the capri-

cious demands of a demented tyrant. And Canus' words and actions throughout the episode are evocative particularly of Socratic irony.[31]

Yet in a second story featuring Gaius, from *de Constantia Sapientis*, irony extends even further, to encompass the *exemplum* as a whole. This *exemplum* opens, like the Canus passage, with the name of the exemplary character whose actions it commemorates. However, the neat ring structure that marked the beginning and end of the Canus *exemplum* is violated here. By the episode's end, its ostensible negative exemplar Gaius and his ostensible victim, Cassius Chaerea, have changed places. Chaerea is revealed to be a positive exemplar, and the emperor becomes his victim. (*Const. Sap.* 18.1 and 3):

> Gaius Caesar, full of verbal abuse among the other vices in which he abounded, was borne along by a wicked desire for smiting everyone with some insult [although] he himself was a most liberal source of ridicule: so great was the foulness of his pale complexion, attesting madness, the savageness of his eyes, hidden below an old woman's forehead, the deformity of his head, both abandoned by hair and scattered with borrowed hair; add a neck besieged by bristles and pitifully thin legs, and enormous feet. It would be a boundless task, were I to report one by one his insults against his parents and grandparents, and those he hurled against all ranks of men; [instead] I shall report [only] those that brought about his end … As for Chaerea, a military tribune, on the other hand, his speech did not accord with his vigor; he had a weak voice which, if you did not know his deeds, would make you mistrustful. To him, when he came to ask the watchword, Gaius would give it as now 'Venus', now 'Priapus', reproaching this soldier one way and another with effeminacy; while he, the one saying these words, was glistening, wearing sandals, and covered in gold. And thus Gaius compelled that man [Chaerea] to use his sword, so that he not have to seek the watchword time and again: that man first among the conspirators raised his hand, that man sliced his neck with one blow; then from all sides blows showered down from swords avenging public and private wrongs, but the first hero was he who least seemed one.[32]

> C. Caesar, inter cetera vitia quibus abundabat contumeliosus, mala libidine ferebatur omnis aliqua nota feriendi ipse materia risus benignissima: tanta illi palloris insaniam testantis foeditas erat, tanta oculorum

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[31] The definition and scope of Socratic irony has been plumbed by a number of scholars; for a start, see Nehemas 1998, 46–98.

[32] It is instructive to compare Seneca's version of this episode to the version in Dio (59.29.2–4). What is left out of Dio's account, i.e., Caligula's appearance and Chaerea's superficial effeminacy, testifies both to Seneca's literary artistry and his particular emphasis on the ironic contrast between appearance and reality. Cf. Suet. *Calig.* 56.2 on Gaius' taunting of Chaerea as *mollis* and *effeminatus*.

> sub fronte anili latentium torvitas, tanta capitis destituti et †emendacitatis† capillis adspersi deformitas; adice obsessam saetis cervicem et exilitatem crurum et enormitatem pedum … inmensum est, si velim singula referre per quae in parentes avosque suos contumeliosus fuit, per quae in universos ordines: ea referam quae illum exitio dederunt … Chaereae contra, tribuno militum, sermo non pro manu erat, languidus sono et, ni facta nosses, suspectior. huic Gaius signum petenti modo Veneris, modo Priapi dabat, aliter atque aliter exprobrans armato mollitiam; haec ipse perlucidus, crepidatus, auratus. coegit itaque illum uti ferro, ne saepius signum peteret: ille primus inter coniuratos manum sustulit, ille cervicem mediam uno ictu decidit; plurimum deinde undique publicas ac privatas iniurias ulciscentium gladiorum ingestum est, sed primus vir fuit qui minime visus est.

Although Chaerea is indubitably the star of this last sentence, Seneca begins the *exemplum*, as he does elsewhere in his dialogues, with the name of his exemplar: Gaius Caesar. He also tells us immediately what Gaius exemplifies, in short, the love of insult. This is an ordinary vice, to be sure, but notice that Seneca is at pains to describe both the magnitude of Gaius' proclivity and also its reliability: Gaius' desire to insult is boundless (*inmensum*) and it extends to everybody, of all ranks and generations (*in parentes avosque suos contumeliosus fuit, per quae in universos ordines*).

Before we examine the grander kinds of irony this episode exemplifies, we may note two small ironies, one verbal and one formal. At *de Ira* 3.19.2, Seneca records Gaius' wish that the whole Roman people had only one neck, so that he might kill them all at once.[33] Seneca seems to phrase the *de Constantia* passage so as to make Gaius the butt of his own wish: *ille cervicem mediam uno ictu decidit.* Since Gaius has only one neck, despite the enormity and multiplicity of his crimes, he can be felled with one blow. Nonetheless, many blows (*plurimum*) followed the first. A second, formal irony lies in the violation of ring composition, the expected form for a Senecan *exemplum*. Although Gaius' name opens the passage, it is not repeated at the end. Chaerea has taken the emperor's place as the anecdote's protagonist and exemplary figure: *primus vir fuit qui minime visus est.* A hint of this reversal of roles occurs at the passage's beginning, with the gerund *feriendi. Ferire* is the verb used for cutting the throat of a sacrificial animal, and while the verb is not

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[33] *optabat ut populus Romanus unam cervicem haberet, ut scelera sua tot locis ac temporibus diducta in unum ictum et unum diem cogeret.* The same wish is also reported by Dio (59.13.6) and Suetonius (*Calig.* 30.2).

repeated at the passage's end, Chaerea's actions liken Gaius to a sacrificial victim; the prefect strikes down the princeps with one blow to the neck.[34]

In addition to these formal and verbal ironies, this episode displays richly developed incongruities of appearance and reality, along with the irony that arises from mistaken assumptions and perspectives. Seneca uses Gaius' vicious enjoyment of a naturally occurring incongruity, in this case the effeminate voice of a battle-tested veteran, to express not only the vast difference that can exist between outward appearance and inward valor but also to illustrate the potential cost of misinterpreting this difference. Gaius' confidence in his ability to exploit an incongruity between appearance and reality turns out to be his undoing. Thus, in addition to the vice that Seneca explicitly names at the outset of the passage, love of insult, this passage presents Gaius implicitly as the negative *exemplum* of a more serious vice. Indeed, a love of insult may be merely a symptom of this more profound failing, that is, the hybris that lies in over-estimating one's own supremacy as ironist. Gaius mistakenly assumes that his ability to control irony is complete, and conversely, that he is immune from becoming irony's victim.[35] If anyone should stand a chance of stopping the possibility of irony infinitely regressing, it would be an absolute ruler such as Gaius. But Seneca shows that even Gaius practices irony at his own risk. Seneca (ironically) suggests both Gaius' vulnerability and his unawareness of that vulnerability by his scathing description of the emperor's dress. Gaius asserts his dominance over the praetorian prefect by insulting Chaerea's masculinity, but he does so tricked out like a smooth and perfumed prostitute.[36] Either Gaius

[34] The 'one blow' to his throat likens Gaius to a sacrificial animal; see Beard *et al.* 1998, 36. Suet. *Calig.* 58.2 also likens the death of Gaius to a sacrifice; with the fatal blow, Chaerea utters the formula that accompanied the act of striking a sacrificial victim: *alii tradunt … Chaeream cervicem gladio caesim graviter percussisse praemissa voce: 'hoc age!'*

[35] On this 'ironist's dilemma', see Muecke 1969, 31.

[36] The section of this *exemplum* that I have omitted, on Gaius' insults to Valerius Asiaticus (which consist in first sleeping with his wife, and then publicly declaring that she did not deliver much pleasure), is very relevant to the irony that derives from the incongruity of appearance and reality in the Chaerea episode; although Gaius dresses like a pathic, he penetrates Valerius' wife, revealing that his effeminate appearance conceals a virile sexual aggressor. Moreover, although Valerius is described as a fierce, manly man (*ferox vir*), Gaius violates his wife with impunity. Cf. Valerius Asiaticus' single appearance in Dio (59.30.1c): 'And when the praetorian guard became excited and began running about and inquiring who had slain Gaius, Valerius Asiaticus, an ex-consul, quieted them in a remarkable mannner; he climbed up to a conspicuous place and cried: "Would that I had killed him"'.

is unaware of the incongruity presented by his own appearance, or he believes that he can flaunt it with impunity. The end of the episode punctures this illusion. The tyrant is killed by his subject, the sacrificer is sacrified, the princeps is replaced by an apparently unlikely hero, who is revealed as *primus vir*.

After declaring Chaerea a hero, Seneca adds a supplementary, illustrative *exemplum*. As elsewhere, the exemplary figure's name opens the *exemplum* (*idem Gaius*); his name is not repeated at the end, but a nominative adjective referring to him (*coturnatus*) closes the passage (*Const. Sap.* 18.4):

> But this same Gaius considered everything insulting, since those who are most desirous of making insults are least able to bear them. He got angry with Herennius Macer, because Macer greeted him as 'Gaius', but a chief centurion was punished because he had said 'Caligula', although the emperor had been born in the camps and was fostered by the legions, so by custom he was called by this name, and was never better known to the soldiers by any other. But now that he wore the boots of a tragic actor, he considered 'Caligula' a rebuke and a disgrace.
>
> at idem Gaius omnia contumelias putabat, ut sunt ferendarum inpatientes faciendarum cupidissimi: iratus fuit Herennio Macro, quod illum Gaium salutaverat, nec inpune cessit primipilari quod Caligulam dixerat; hoc enim in castris natus et alumnus legionum vocari solebat, nullo nomine militibus familiarior umquam factus, sed iam Caligulam convicium et probrum iudicabat coturnatus.

Both men are doomed, although each speaker addresses Gaius by the name that his position in society would, by normal standards, render appropriate. It would be surprising and probably uncouth for a senator to address the princeps as 'Caligula', but Seneca suggests that it was perfectly understandable that he be hailed in that way by a veteran. Coming from a soldier, the nickname was a term of esteem. But both the centurion and the senator are made innocent victims of Gaius' ironic inconsistency. Further, according to Seneca, it is not Gaius' imperial dignity that was offended by 'Caligula', but his self-regard as an actor.[37] What links the two *exempla*, Chaerea's revenge on Gaius and Gaius' tyrannical response to these respectful forms of address, is Gaius' failure in each case to see that he too can be made a monkey of. The adjective that closes the passage, *coturnatus*, describes Gaius as he desires to be depicted and ironizes that desire with the

[37] On Caligula's theatrical endeavors, see Bellemore 1994.

same word. The princeps is represented as thinking that he is the sole producer, writer, and director of his drama, as well as its star. But Gaius seems oblivious to the fact that the protagonist of a tragedy, an Oedipus or Pentheus, is often its ultimate victim. The outcome of the Chaerea *exemplum*, which culminates in Gaius' murder, puts this ironic interpretation on his preference for tragic dress. *Coturnatus* pithily suggests what Seneca spells out elsewhere: Nature, or providence, or fate, is the universal producer, and in fate's universal production, Gaius too is merely a player.

Gaius' fascination with theatrics is also a means for revealing his vulnerability to irony and his literal vulnerability in an *exemplum* from *de Ira* (1.20.7–9). Seneca offers the story to cap his argument that a volatile temper does not indicate a great heart; in fact, that outward bluster conceals cowardice (*quorum strepitus magnus … intra mens pavidissima*). As usual, the *exemplum* begins with the name of the exemplary figure it concerns.

> Gaius Caesar grew angry at the sky because [by thundering] it interrupted some pantomimes, whom he was more eager to imitate than to watch, and because his own entertainment was scared silent by the thunderbolts (which were surely misaimed), he challenged Jove to fight, yes, and without quarter, exclaiming a Homeric verse: 'Lift me, or I you!' What great madness! For he thought he could not be harmed, even by Jove, or even that he was capable of harming Jove. I suppose that this speech of his had no little weight in arousing the minds of the conspirators; for to bear with a person who could not bear Jove seemed the limit of endurance!
>
> C. Caesar, qui iratus caelo quo obstreperetur pantomimis, quos imitabatur studiosius quam spectabat, quodque comessatio sua fulminibus terreretur (prorsus parum certis), ad pugnam vocavit Iovem et quidem sine missione, Homericum illum exclamans versum: ἤ μ' ἀνάειρ' ἢ ἐγὼ σέ·[38] quanta dementia fuit! putavit aut sibi noceri ne ab Iove quidem posse aut se nocere etiam Iovi posse. non puto parum momenti hanc eius vocem ad incitandas coniuratorum mentes addidisse; ultimae enim patientiae visum est eum ferre qui Iovem non ferret.

In this episode, even before Gaius challenges Jupiter to a wrestling match, he has demonstrated how thoroughly he misconstrues his proper place in nature's scheme by his interest in emulating pantomimes,

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[38] The quotation is from *Iliad* 23.724, spoken by Telamonian Ajax to Odysseus as he challenges him to a wrestling match. Dio also records this quote (59.28.5–7) among Gaius' divine pretensions, as does Suetonius (22.4), where the quote is recorded as part of Gaius' whispered one-on-one conversations with [the statue of] Capitoline Jupiter.

whose craft and status he ought to utterly disdain.[39] His ludicrous quotation from Homer affects his hearers inside the anecdote in the same way that it works on us. Gaius' confusion of personal insult with natural phenomena reveals the way things really are both to Seneca's readers, and, Seneca imagines, to the men who would become Gaius' executioners. The emperor thinks he is sublime, but he is ridiculous; he thinks he is omnipotent, but this very delusion reveals his vulnerability, both to us readers and to his subjects.[40] Seneca's remarks at the end of the story encourage us to consider Gaius the victim of cosmic irony, but as a character in a dialogue he is also the subject of Senecan irony, not to mention Senecan sarcasm.

When we look back over his descriptions of the vicious behavior of Gaius in the passages from *de Ira* and *de Constantia Sapientis* on which we have been focused, Seneca's sarcasm may introduce uncomfortable considerations, particularly if we are inclined to read the dialogues as the work of an author who himself sincerely aspired to Stoic virtue. Seneca has often been accused of being overfond of paradox, irony, and pointed sarcasm.[41] He may also be charged with the same faults he blames in Gaius; love of insult and hybristic over-estimation of himself as the final arbiter of irony. For instance, Seneca's detailed portrait of the emperor's physical deformity at *Const. Sap.* 18.1 is not necessary to establish Gaius' love of insult, although it does make the passage more vivid. Is Seneca not also convicted of contumely by his scathing ennumeration of the emperor's physical flaws? His answer, presumably, would be no; it is implied by a brief but similarly unflattering description of himself that comes just a page before the Gaius *exemplum* (*Const. Sap.* 16.4):

> Someone makes a joke of the sparsity of hair on my head, the weakness of my eyes and the thinness of my leg and my build—why is it an insult to hear what is readily apparent?
>
> in capitis mei levitatem iocatus est et in oculorum valetudinem et in crurum gracilitatem et in staturam: quae contumelia est quod apparet audire?

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39 Because he is an aristocrat; see Edwards 1997, 83–90.

40 Cf. Dio 59.30: 'Thus Gaius … learned by actual experience that he was not a god'; Suet. *Calig.* 58.2: 'When Chaerea asked for the watchword and Gaius said "Jove", Chaerea replied, "So be it"' (*signum more militiae petisse et Gaio 'Iovem' dante Chaeream exclamasse 'accipe ratum!'*).

41 Wilson 1987, 107–108 collects some of the most famous and colorful complaints against Senecan style; Caligula himself heads up a long line of critics (Suet. *Calig.* 53.2).

Likewise, to describe Gaius' ugliness accurately is not an insult. Moreover, there is a didactic utility to describing Gaius at length; his appearance offers a lesson in the untrustworthiness of appearances. Chaerea appeared effeminate, and was not, but we may not conclude from that instance of incongruity that a façade is always contradicted by its interior: Gaius really was as bad as he looked.[42]

The second charge to which Seneca makes himself vulnerable, that of hybristic over-estimation of his own control of irony, is a danger for anyone who uses irony to moralize. Later events, or alternative perspectives, may always predominate, undermining the ironic thrust of his or her lesson, in which case the lesson itself, too, may be undercut. This problem is not confined to moralists, however, nor to ironists. According to a Stoic worldview, it is a potential pitfall for any person who acts, deliberately aiming to achieve a specific effect. Seneca's awareness of this general irony is reflected, fittingly, in another anecdote about Gaius (*de Ira* 3.21.5):

> There was a very lovely villa near Herculaneum, which, since his mother had been imprisoned there at one time, Gaius Caesar had torn down, and through this act, he made its fate well known. For while it was still standing, we sailed past it, but now, people ask why it was torn down.
>
> C. enim Caesar villam in Herculanensi pulcherrimam, quia mater sua aliquando in illa custodita erat, diruit fecitque eius per hoc notabilem fortunam; stantem enim praenavigabamus, nunc causa dirutae quaeritur.

Apparently no one but Gaius took much notice of this villa while it stood, but once the irritating (to him) reminder of his mother's captivity was obliterated, its site became a significant reminder (to others) of his tyranny. And so, ironically, fate gets the better of Gaius again. In this story, Gaius' apparent vice—anger—is symptomatic of another flaw, namely, his commonplace conviction that his deliberate acts will bring about only, and precisely, the results that he intends. Any ordinary human agent might have made the same mistake: privileging our own perspective, and our own aims, seems basic to human nature. But this view does not reflect the true state of affairs as a Stoic will see them. He will see that only a wise man, whose perspective, desires, and will are fully in agreement with Nature, will act in accord with the paradoxical truth that Nature builds irony into the world, and

[42] For Socrates as the ultimate exemplar of incongruity of outward appearance and inward virtue (e.g., Pl. *Smp.* 215a–b), see McLean 2007. Another example is Aesop, on which see Lefkowitz's chapter in this volume.

controls it. In this Stoic order of things, our human intentions will be fully realized only when our actions perfectly express the rationality that governs the universe. Seneca's stories about an exemplar whose attempts to grasp and manage reality repeatedly backfire remind us that in a Stoic universe, fate not only determines our place in the order of things while we live, but also how we are remembered. Only the wise man will be invulnerable to irony, because only he will possess the 'absolute circumspection', in Muecke's phrase, that irony's perfect exercise requires.

6. *Conclusion*

At the outset of his *Naturales Quaestiones*, Seneca tells his interlocutor that one branch of philosophy deals with humans, another with gods (*NQ Praef.* 1.1–2): 'One teaches us what we should do on earth, the other what is done in heaven' (*altera docet quid in terris agendum sit, altera quid agatur in caelo*). Gaius' appearances in the *Dialogues*—scolding thunderbolts, humiliating soldiers, and arbitrarily executing noble Romans—show that he is properly to be included in the human, ethical sphere. But the passages that characterize Gaius as a monster, whom nature produced (*quem rerum natura … edidit*), may well give some grounds to include this emperor, who wanted to be thought a god, in the realm of cosmological contemplation. Gaius was not a god, but he serves a purpose in God's, that is, Nature's plan. If we accept, as Seneca did, the Stoic doctrine of a providential universe, we must regard Gaius' vice as, on the cosmological level, not an evil at all. What looks like evil, to conventional ways of thinking and speaking, turns out to be simple irony, a paradox that resolves itself when we reorient our perspective to align with Stoic teachings on providence and nature.[43]

[43] Early versions of this paper were delivered at College of the Holy Cross and Williams College; I thank those audiences for their perceptive comments. Many thanks also go to the conference participants and attendees of the Penn-Leiden Colloquium and to this volume's editors for their useful responses and suggestions.

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CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

HELIOGABALUS,[1] A MONSTER ON THE ROMAN THRONE: THE LITERARY CONSTRUCTION OF A 'BAD' EMPEROR

Martijn Icks

1. *Introduction*

Reading the accounts of authors like Tacitus, Suetonius, and Cassius Dio, one might get the impression that the Roman empire has only been ruled by two kinds of emperor: the good and the bad. While Roman historians and biographers praise the deeds of such perceived paragons of virtue as Augustus, Trajan, and Marcus Aurelius, they condemn the crimes of supposedly mad, cruel rulers like Caligula, Nero, and Commodus. In the works of these authors, the emperor is often presented as an *exemplum* of moral or immoral behavior. *Exempla* formed an important part of Roman discourse. By commemorating famous or infamous deeds from the past, authors hoped to inspire their audience to follow (or reject) these examples and thus uphold the values which were dear to Roman society.[2] As the most important public figure, the emperor was supposed to be the exemplary figure *par excellence.* Ancient authors often exaggerated their vices and virtues, presenting them as either saints or monsters. For instance, Pliny's *Panegyricus* puts the noble Trajan in stark contrast to his sinister predecessor, Domitian, while Herodian scorns the frivolous Commodus for not following the excellent example set by his father, Marcus Aurelius.[3]

During the course of the twentieth century, scholars of Greek and Roman history became increasingly aware that ancient literature

[1] I have chosen to refer to the emperor as Heliogabalus instead of Elagabalus or Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, as he was officially called, to avoid confusion with the god Elagabal and the emperor Caracalla, whose official name was also Marcus Aurelius Antoninus.

[2] Roller 2004.

[3] Pliny, *Panegyricus*; Herodian I.

cannot be taken at face value. It is now generally acknowledged that the form and contents of historical and biographic texts are determined by many functions. Among other things, they follow the stylistic demands of their genre, serve as a platform for political and philosophical ideas, propagate moral values, employ literary *loci communes*, and praise or condemn influential figures. Truthfulness is but one of their authors' concerns, and is often compromised for dramatic, stylistic, or educational reasons. Moreover, we should keep in mind that literary representations were for a large part determined by factors outside the field of literature. In the case of emperors, these include the self-images which the rulers propagated by means of coins and statues, material monuments they left behind, and whether they had been deified by the senate or had suffered a *damnatio memoriae*.[4] Such external factors had to be taken into account by those writing an imperial biography or history; they provided a framework within which the literary presentation had to fit.

In his splendid study of Tacitus, published in 1958, Ronald Syme devoted considerable attention to the historian's construction of Tiberius as an evil tyrant who gradually succumbed to his innate vices.[5] Several decades later, Jaś Elsner and Jamie Masters edited *Reflections of Nero*, a volume devoted to the different portrayals of the last Julio-Claudian in ancient literature and modern popular culture.[6] Edward Champlin even attempted to redeem the oft-scorned emperor, making the (controversial) claim that Nero in fact embarked on some outlandish projects, such as the fire at Rome, out of relatively rational motives.[7] Many others have likewise turned their gaze at the literary representations of Roman rulers, analyzing the ways in which ancient authors portrayed their subjects in a particular light.

2. *Heliogabalus*

For scholars who are interested in Roman portrayals of 'good' and 'bad' rulers, the short-lived emperor Heliogabalus (218–222 CE) presents an interesting case. Despite the brevity of his reign, few, if any, emperors

[4] For the effects of *damnatio memoriae*, in particular on inscriptions, see Flower 2000.
[5] Syme 1958, vol. I, 420–434.
[6] Elsner and Masters 1994.
[7] Champlin 2003.

have been more vehemently condemned by Roman historiography. Ancient authors have described him as an 'unworthy emperor', a 'pest', a 'scourge', 'one by whom nothing was done that was not evil and base', and 'that filthiest of all creatures, both two-footed and four-footed', claiming that he outdid Nero, Vitellius, and Commodus in baseness and debauchery.[8]

How bad things really were, is a question without a definite answer. Heliogabalus came to the throne as a fourteen-year-old boy. He had gained the support of the army with the claim that he was a bastard son of the murdered emperor Caracalla. In all likelihood, he was only Caracalla's first cousin once removed, being a grandson of Julia Maesa, who was the sister of Caracalla's mother, Julia Domna. Before his sudden rise to power, Heliogabalus had served as the high priest of Elagabal, the sun god of the Syrian town of Emesa, where his maternal ancestors came from. Elagabal was worshiped in the form of a conical black stone. During his short reign, the emperor put the local deity at the head of the Roman pantheon. Furthermore, he married the high priestess of the Vestal virgins, possibly to forge a link between the cult of Elagabal and the traditional religion of Rome.[9] Apart from these reforms, the emperor seems to have done nothing of great significance. He did not wage any wars and his building activities in Rome were largely restricted to the construction of two big temples for Elagabal. In 222 CE, when he was eighteen years old, Heliogabalus was killed in a revolt by the praetorians. The senate cursed his memory; his images were destroyed, his name erased from inscriptions. Why the young monarch met with so much hostility is uncertain, although his disrespect for Roman traditions and religion may well have been an important factor in his untimely demise.

Three ancient authors have discussed the period 218–222 CE in detail. The first is the senator Cassius Dio, a contemporary of Heliogabalus, who wrote a history of the Roman empire in Greek. Unfortunately, Dio was not present in Rome during Heliogabalus' reign and did not witness the events he describes directly.[10] The same goes for Herodian, a historian who likewise wrote in Greek and may have been of the eques-

[8] Herodian 5.8.8 (ἀσχημονοῦντα βασιλέα); *SHA, Vita Antonini Heliogabali* 10.1 (*pestem*); *SHA, Vita Ant. Heliog.* 34.1 (*clades*); Cassius Dio 79.29.2 (ὑφ' οὗ οὐδὲν ὅ τι οὐ κακὸν καὶ αἰσχρὸν ἐγένετο); *SHA, Vita Alexandri* 9.4 (*omnium non solum bipedum sed etiam quadrupedum spurcissimus*).

[9] For more on this, see Icks 2006.

[10] Millar 1964, 168–170.

trian order, although it seems more likely that he was (the son of) an imperial freedman.[11] The third author remains nameless. In all likelihood, he was a pagan senator writing at the end of the fourth century CE.[12] His *Vita Heliogabali* is a part of a series of imperial biographies, known as the *Historia Augusta*—a work which claims to have been written by six different authors at the time of Diocletian and Constantine and is notoriously unreliable.

Although these accounts of Heliogabalus' reign have been examined in detail, most scholars have not concerned themselves with the images they present of the emperor. Instead, they have focused on the questions of their reliability, their dependence on each other, and their influence on contemporary and later authors, the political and ideological views of the authors, and—in the case of the *Vita Heliogabali*—the way to interpret the author's account of the emperor's religious policy.[13] As far as I am aware, only Michael Sommer has attempted to analyze the literary image of Heliogabalus as a 'tyrant', comparing the images presented by all three major accounts.[14] He looks into four categories which take a prominent place in the sources: sexual perversions; cruelty and luxuriousness; the role of the Severan women; and the breaking of religious taboos. Sommer concludes that Dio and the *Historia Augusta* portray Heliogabalus as a typical tyrant whose 'badness' results from 'Caesarenwahn', whereas Herodian paints a fundamentally different picture, connecting the emperor's faults to his Syrian background. As we will see, this is only partially correct.

In this chapter, I will use the case study of Heliogabalus to examine the ways in which Greco-Roman authors used literary *loci communes* to distinguish between 'good' and 'bad' rulers. Following the example of Suetonius, imperial biographers usually broke the emperor's life up into mostly synchronic rubrics, including everything from physiognomy and familial relations through to *spectacula*, building projects, and legislation.[15] Cassius Dio and Herodian combine this approach with Tacitus' annalistic year-by-year structure, whereas the *Historia Augusta* fully adopts the model of Suetonius.[16] The three authors touch on

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[11] Alföldy 1989, 262–269.
[12] Syme 1986, 211, 219.
[13] Most noteworthy is Optendrenk 1969.
[14] Sommer 2004.
[15] For an in-depth study of Suetonius' approach and vision as an imperial biographer, see Wallace-Hadrill 1983.
[16] For the structuring of Dio's books on the early principate, see Pelling 1997.

many themes regarding the character and reign of Heliogabalus. Some of these can also be found in the lives of other 'bad' emperors; for instance, the stories about the emperor's cruelty, his frivolous nature, and his blatant disrespect for Roman offices and institutions, especially the senate. Other themes are unique for Heliogabalus. These include the emphasis which Dio and the *Historia Augusta* put on the assertion that Heliogabalus was no real Antonine; the remark in the *Historia Augusta* that the emperor modeled his private life on that of the famous cook Apicius; and the description, again in the *Historia Augusta*, of his gruesome death, which is said to be unique for all Roman emperors.[17]

Many of Heliogabalus's characteristics, as described in the sources, are part of an inflated moralizing discourse, following rather special rhetorical and sociological principles, which I will not discuss in detail.[18] Likewise, I will not elaborate here on all the themes marking Heliogabalus as a 'bad' emperor. In this chapter, I will restrict myself to three.[19] Firstly, I will look at the ethnic stereotyping of Heliogabalus because of his Syrian background. No other emperor has been so explicity portrayed as an 'oriental'.[20] Secondly, I will look at his alleged effeminacy, and thirdly, at the luxurious and licentious lifestyle he supposedly adopted. The two latter accusations are hardly unique for Heliogabalus, but receive a remarkably strong emphasis in the literary representation of this emperor. The *Historia Augusta* in particular portrays Heliogabalus as outdoing all his predecessors in these respects, making him the worst ruler of them all.

3. *The 'oriental' emperor*

Like the Greeks, the Romans had many stereotypes about the people living in the 'East'—an area which contained not only the Parthian or

[17] Cassius Dio 79.32.4; 24.4 *SHA, Vita Ant. Heliog.* 1.5; 9.2; 33.8; 18.4; 17.1–7.

[18] For more on this discourse and its *loci communes* in general, see Edwards 1993.

[19] A more complete and thorough treatment of Heliogabalus' representation as a 'bad' emperor will appear in my forthcoming Ph.D. thesis, provisionally titled *Images of Elagabalus*. It treats accusations such as illegitimacy, cruelty, effeminacy, luxuriousness, licentiousness, profanity, barbarous habits, bad government and appointment policy, frivolity, and arrogance, as well as criticism of the emperor's very young age.

[20] Compare, for instance, Herodian's treatment of Heliogabalus to that of Severus Alexander, who came from the same family, but whose Syrian background hardly plays a role in his literary representation.

Persian empire, but Syria, as well. While Romans were supposed to be strong and manly, 'orientals' were allegedly weak and effeminate. They surrounded themselves with an extravagant luxury which was at odds with the Roman ideals of simplicity and moderation.[21] A notorious example was the mythical Assyrian king Sardanapalus, who lived the life of a woman amidst his concubines and only seemed to care about the earthly delights of food, drink, and sex.[22] Contacts with the 'soft' East brought nothing good: they exposed the Romans to pleasures and luxuries which undermined the military virtue of Roman society.[23]

Heliogabalus, too, was presented as an 'oriental' in Greco-Roman literature, even though his mother's family had possessed Roman citizenship for about two centuries and Sextus Varius Marcellus, who was in all likelihood his father, had held several important posts in the imperial administration.[24] Cassius Dio regularly calls the emperor by the name Sardanapalus, and mentions that another of his nicknames was 'the Assyrian'.[25] The senator also slanders the cult of Elagabal, mentioning that the god was worshiped with 'barbaric chants' and child sacrifices—the latter a big taboo in the Greco-Roman world.[26] However, Sommer has pointed out that Dio uses the cult of Elagabal primarily as a means to depict the emperor's disrespect for Roman laws and traditions.[27] Hence, much is made of the elevation of the sun god to the head of the Roman pantheon and Heliogabalus' marriage to a Vestal virgin.[28] Although the emperor himself is repeatedly associated with the 'East', the 'oriental' character of the cult is hardly touched upon.

Herodian takes pains to characterize both the emperor and his god as typically 'oriental'. He gives an elaborate description of Heliogabalus' dress, comparing it to the garbs of the Phoenicians and the Medes. 'Any Roman or Greek dress he loathed because, he claimed, it was made out of wool, which is a cheap material. Only seric silk

[21] Isaac 2004, 335–351.
[22] Diodorus Siculus 2.23.1–27.3; Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae* 12.528f–530c. On the stereotype of the effeminate 'oriental' monarch in Athenaeus, see Gambato 2000, 227–230.
[23] Edwards 1993, 92–97.
[24] Cassius Dio 79.30.2; Dessau, *ILS* 8687 (= *CIL* XV 7326); *ILS* 478 (= *CIL* X 6569). Heliogabalus' mother was Julia Soaemias, a daughter of Julia Maesa.
[25] Cassius Dio 80.1.1.
[26] Cassius Dio 80.11.
[27] Sommer 2004, 104–105.
[28] Cassius Dio 80.11.1; 9.3.

was good enough for him'.[29] The point is stressed even further when Herodian records that Heliogabalus refused to wear a Roman toga on first entering the capital. Instead, the emperor chose to send a portrait of himself ahead, so the citizens could get used to his outlandish appearance.[30] The cult of Elagabal is likewise portrayed as distinctly foreign and 'un-Roman'. According to the historian, Heliogabalus performed 'orgiastic and ecstatic' rites for his god, which involved cymbals and drums, dancing with women, and the slaughter of hecatombs of cattle.[31] Sommer argues that Herodian's Heliogabalus is essentially different from Dio's, because the former is emphatically presented as a foreigner, whereas the latter could be regarded as just another mad tyrant.[32] However, this interpretation fails to take into account that Dio, time and time again, compares Heliogabalus to Sardanapalus. I would argue that both authors represent the emperor as an 'oriental', although Herodian is more explicit.

Interestingly, the *Historia Augusta* puts little emphasis on Heliogabalus' 'oriental' background. It *does* give a negative image of the cult of Elagabal, elaborating on Dio's story about human sacrifices, but the cult is not primarily used to establish Heliogabalus as a foreigner.[33] Instead, the emperor is presented as a monotheist who violates the sacred rites of the Romans and wants to destroy all other religions.[34] Considering that the author was probably a pagan in a time when the old gods of Rome were being pushed aside by the one, universal God of Constantine and his successors, it is not hard to presume a parallel between the cult of Elagabal and Christianity. In fact, it has been argued that the *Vita Heliogabali* is an indirect attack on Constantine, while Severus Alexander—favorably presented in the subsequent *vita*—is meant to evoke Julian, the last pagan emperor.[35] Whether this is true or not, the *Vita Heliogabali* certainly speaks out against religious intolerance.

[29] Herodian 5.5.3–4.
[30] Herodian 5.5.5–7.
[31] Herodian 5.7.2 (βακχείαις καὶ ὀργίοις τοῖς τε θείοις ἔργοις); 5.8–10.
[32] Sommer 2004, 107–108.
[33] *SHA, Vita Ant. Heliog.* 8.1–2.
[34] *SHA, Vita Ant. Heliog.* 6.6–7; 7.4.
[35] Paschoud 1990, 566–571.

4. *The effeminate emperor*

As could be expected of an 'oriental', Heliogabalus was as little a true man as he was a true Roman. Effeminacy was an oft-appearing commonplace in Roman discourse, associated with political, social, and moral weakness. It was also associated with (excessive) luxury.[36] In fact, Edwards remarks, 'whatever qualities were undesirable in a male member of the Roman elite were termed "feminine" '.[37]

In the literary representation of Heliogabalus, the accusation of effeminacy features prominently. Cassius Dio once again compares the emperor to Sardanapalus. Like the Assyrian king, Heliogabalus is said to spend his time working wool—a typically 'feminine' job—use make-up and pitch his voice to sound like a woman.[38] He also had a male lover, the charioteer Hierocles, whom he regarded as his 'husband' and whom he wanted to appoint as *Caesar*.[39] Often, he would deliberately let himself get caught by this man while committing adultery and got beaten up, with black eyes as the result—a display of 'feminine' submission to which even Sardanapalus had never degraded himself.[40] According to Dio, the emperor was so effeminate that he wanted to cut off his genitals.[41] Further, 'he asked the physicians to contrive a woman's vagina in his body by means of an incision'.[42]

Herodian, too, mentions that Heliogabalus 'used to go out with painted eyes and rouge on his cheeks, spoiling his natural good looks by using disgusting make-up', and was 'effeminately dressed up'.[43] The *Vita Heliogabali* follows suit, recording that Heliogabalus always bathed with the women in the bathhouse, wished to wear a jeweled diadem to make his face appear more womanly, and liked to dress up as Venus.[44] When

[36] Edwards 1993, 65, 80.

[37] Edwards 1993, 81.

[38] Cassius Dio 80.14.3–4.

[39] Marriage between males was a commonplace which regularly emerges in Roman literature, for instance in the satires of Martial and Juvenal, and in accounts of the reign of Nero. One man was always supposed to take the female role. He, not his partner, was the aim of mockery. See Williams 1999, 245–257.

[40] Cassius Dio 80.15.1–4.

[41] Cassius Dio 80.11.1.

[42] Cassius Dio 80.16.7. Curiously, this intention did not stop the emperor from expressing the wish to have 'godlike children' with Aquilia Severa (80.9.3).

[43] Herodian 5.6.10; 7.8.

[44] *SHA, Vita Ant. Heliog.* 31.7; 23.5; 5.4–5.

going to the praetorian camp or the senate house, he needed to take his grandmother with him, 'in order that through her prestige he might get greater respect—for by himself he got none'.[45] As in Dio's account about the emperor's violent relationship with Hierocles, this remark demonstrates how Heliogabalus left it to others to play the dominant role of a man, settling for a passive, 'feminine' role himself. The story that the emperor let his mother attend the senate likewise points at the gender inversion during Heliogabalus' reign, with women meddling in affairs which were commonly regarded as the exclusive domain of men.[46] In addition, it links Heliogabalus to another effeminate tyrant: Nero, who also took a man for his husband and put his mother in charge of both public and private affairs.[47]

5. *The luxurious and licentious emperor*

Extravagant luxury and a licentious lifestyle are standard accusations against emperors who are portrayed as evil tyrants in Greco-Roman historiography. They are also traits which many Romans considered to be typical of 'orientals'. It was felt that uncontrolled sexuality undermined the moral order of the state.[48] In his treatment of Heliogabalus' sexual prowess, Cassius Dio subscribes to this notion. He remarks that 'this Sardanapalus … lived most licentiously himself from first to last' and 'used his body both for doing and allowing many strange things, which no one could endure to tell or hear of'—even going so far as to prostitute himself in the imperial palace.[49] Not even Caligula, who had forced aristocratic women and children to prostitute themselves in the palace, had been so shameless as to lower himself to playing the whore.[50] Curiously, Herodian has little to say about the emperor's sexual feats. He does address Heliogabalus' love for luxury—for example by remarking that the boy wore a tiara and would only dress in clothes

[45] *SHA, Vita Ant. Heliog.* 12.3.

[46] *SHA, Vita Ant. Heliog.* 4.1–2. Heliogabalus' establishment of a women's senate (4.3–4) is a less convincing example of gender inversion, since this body only decreed rules of protocol for matrons.

[47] Suetonius 6. (Nero) 29; 9. Nero also took a man as his 'bride' (28.1).

[48] Edwards 1993, 91–92.

[49] Cassius Dio 80.13.1; 13.2; 13.3–4.

[50] Cassius Dio 59.28.9.

made of seric silk, as we have seen—but this theme, too, seems somewhat underdeveloped in his work.[51]

To see the accusations of luxury and licentiousness being applied to maximum effect, we need to turn to the *Historia Augusta*. For Heliogabalus, the author assures us, 'life was nothing except a search after pleasures'.[52] He records that the emperor sent out agents to collect men with large members, with whom he had sexual intercourse and on whom he even bestowed powerful positions.[53] The young monarch also gathered all the prostitutes of Rome to deliver a speech to them, opened brothels in the palace and 'invented certain new kinds of vice, even going beyond the perversities used by the debauchees of old'.[54] He had couches made of solid silver, feasted on camel-heels, cock-combs, and the tongues of peacocks and nightingales, fed his dogs on goose-livers, and held naval battles in basins of wine.[55] Even Nero, whose Golden House had hitherto been the epitome of extravagant luxury, was outdone: whereas the first-century tyrant had flowers showering down on his banquet guests from reversible ceiling panels, Heliogabalus literally drowned his guests in an avalanche of flowers, smothering some of them to death.[56] In doing so, the emperor illustrated not only his unprecedented love for excess, but also his casual cruelty.

6. *Conclusion*

Cassius Dio, Herodian, and the anonymous author of the *Vita Heliogabali* all portrayed Heliogabalus as a monster—an example of everything a Roman emperor should *not* be. However, the pictures they paint are not completely similar. For Dio and Herodian, the young monarch from Syria was first and foremost a foreigner, an 'oriental' whose faults could, to a large extent, be explained by his Syrian background. In presenting him as such, they placed themselves in an anti-oriental tradition which had characterized Greco-Roman historiography for centuries. Moreover, Sommer has pointed out that Herodian experienced the rise of the powerful, new Persian empire of the Sassanids, which

[51] Herodian 5.5.3–4.
[52] *SHA, Vita Ant. Heliog.* 19.6.
[53] *SHA, Vita Ant. Heliog.* 5.3; 8.6–7; 12.2.
[54] *SHA, Vita Ant. Heliog.* 26.3–4; 24.2; 33.1.
[55] *SHA, Vita Ant. Heliog.* 20.4–5; 21.1; 23.1.
[56] Suetonius 6.(Nero) 31.2; *SHA, Vita Ant. Heliog.* 12.5.

was founded in 226 CE and would prove to be a dangerous enemy to Rome.[57] This experience may have contributed to his emphasis on Heliogabalus's 'oriental' traits. The author of the *Vita Heliogabali*, writing more than 150 years later, had other concerns. He presented his subject as a fanatical monotheist who wished to destroy all other religions—and as a ruler whose shameless display of wealth exceeded even the pomp of the late-fourth-century courts.

The case of Heliogabalus shows us how an emperor whose reign was only noteworthy because of one particular act—namely, the elevation of the god Elagabal to the head of the Roman pantheon—could be vilified to the extreme in Greco-Roman literature. In order to turn their subject into a monster, Cassius Dio, Herodian and the author of *the Historia Augusta* attacked the emperor's devotion to and policy concerning a local Syrian cult. However, it was Heliogabalus's lack of initiative in other matters which allowed them to portray the young monarch as nothing more than an idle, luxury-loving adolescent, who was completely unfit to rule. The *damnatio memoriae* of the emperor, the destruction of his images and the erasure of his name from inscriptions had set the tone; consequently, ancient historians and biographers rewrote his reign with all the vitriolic comments they could muster. The man disappeared from memory; the monster remained.

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[57] Sommer 2004, 110.

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I

INDEX OF GREEK TERMS

ἀγαθός, 17, 31, 32, 33 f., 36, 56
ἀδικία, 15 + n. 39, 16
ἄδικος, 132, 326
αἴνιγμα, 70 + n. 27
αἰσχύνη, 133
αἶσχος, 120
αἰσχρολογία, -εῖν, 95 n. 39, 107, 109 n. 82, 120 f., 134, 139, 156
αἰσχρόν, τό, 18, 120, 121 n. 7, 176, 479 n. 8
αἰσχρός, 20, 62, 75, 134, 187
ἄκραντα, 53
ἀκριβής, 355, 357
ἀκριβολογία, 327
ἀκρίβως, 327
ἄλγος, 9 n. 22
ἀμαθία, 357 + n. 69, 360
ἁμαρτία, 132
ἀμαχανία, 44, 45, 104
ἀμορφία, 72
ἀναίδεια, 357 + n. 69, 360
ἀνανδρία, 13 f. 18
ἀνδρεία, 3
ἄνευ κακίας, 330
ἀπαιδευσία, 342
ἀποκνίζειν, 102 ff.
ἀπόμαγμα, 73
ἀποσκώπτειν, 99
ἀρετή, 15, 17, 30, 33, 38 n. 18, 40, 139, 272
ἀστράτεια, 175 n. 14, 176
αὐθάδεια, 235 n. 4
αὐθάδης, 235 n. 4, n. 5
ἀφωνία, 59 f. + n. 1
ἄχος, 9 n. 22

βδελυρός, 187
βλασφημεῖν, 359, 360
βούβρωστις, 10
βουκολιάζεσθαι, 113
βωμολοχία, 122, 342, 360
βωμολόχος, 127, 156, 185 + n. 2, 200 n. 54, 204

γελοῖον, τό, 119 f., 122 f., 139
γελωτοποιός, 185
γραφὴ ἑταιρήσεως, 219, 220 ff. + n. 110
γραφὴ συκοφαντίας, 219, 229

δάκος, 112
δειλός, 31, 32, 56, 120, 129
διάνοια, 147 n. 7
διασύρειν, 121 f. + n. 9
δοκιμασία, 175, 219, 220 ff.
δοκιμασία ῥητόρων, 219, 220 ff.

ἐμπίπτειν, 90, 92
ἐπισίτιος, 185, 197
ἐπιτίθεσθαι, 126
ἐπιχαιρεκακία, 255 n. 1, 262 + n. 25, 264, 269 + n. 45, n. 46, 270
ἐπιχειρεῖν, 126
ἔρανος, 177
ἐριδμαίνειν, 105 n. 70
ἐρώμενος, 95, 185, 187, 218
ἐσθλός, 9, 31, 32, 37, 56
ἐτυμολογεῖν, 344
εὐμαχανία, 44 + n. 34
εὐρύπρωκτος, 127, 185, 188 n. 8, 191, 193, 201, 202, 205, 206, 207, 216, 217
εὐτελής, 294

ζῆλος, 258, 259, 262 + n. 25, 263, 272 n. 52, 278

ἦθος, 234, 235 n. 4, n. 5, 255, 262, 266, 272 + n. 55, 275

θράσος, 13

καιρός, 49, 55
κακά, 8 n. 19, 9 n. 22, 40 n. 20, 156, 157, 359
κακαγορία, 42, 44, 46 n. 40
κακηγορία, 44, 46 n. 40, 243 f., 250, 254
κακηγορεῖν, 120
κακία, 15, 16, 18, 31, 33, 62, 115, 120, ch 9 *passim*, 255 n. 1, 268 n. 43, 319 ff., 325, 326, 327 n. 15, 330, 333, 335, 451
κακόβιος, 241
κακοδαιμονία, 243 f., 250, 254
κακοήθεια, 243, 245 + n. 17, 250, 254
κακοθηνεῖν, 241
κακολογία, 113, 243, 245. 250, 254
κακόλογον, τό, 99
κακόλογος, 39
κακόνους, 241
κακοπάθεια, 243, 246 f., 250, 254
κακόπατρις, 241, 242
κακοπέτης, 241
κακοποιία, 236, 243, 248, 250, 254
κακοποιός, 51
κακοπονητικός, 241
κακόποτμος, 241
κακόπους, 241
κακοπραγία, 243, 248, 250, 254, 258, 264, 269 n. 45
κακόπτερος, 241
κακός, 4, 7 ff., 19, 20, 21, 31, 32, 33 f., 35, 37, 38, 41, 56, 62, 73, 75, 127 ff., 143 n. 1, 185, 187, ch. 9 *passim*, 257, 319, 325, 479 n. 8
κακὸς κακῶς etc., 128
κακότης, 31, 35, 36, 45
κακουργεῖν, 326
κακουργία, 243 f., 248, 250, 254
and ὕβρις, 249
κακοφραδής, 241, 242
κακόφωνος, 241
κακόχρους, 241
κακόχυμος, 241
κακωδέστερος, 241
κακῶς, 345 + n. 34 *et saep.*
κακῶς λέγειν, 122 n. 9, 123
κάκωσις, 251
καλοκἀγαθός, 59
κάνθαρος, ch. 4 *passim*
καταπύγων, 127, 185, 188 n. 8, 193 + n. 26, 206, 212, 217
καχεξία, 241, 243, 249, 250, 251, 254
καχύποπτος, 241
κερδαίνω, 179
κέρδος, 31, 44, 47
κερτομεῖν, 105 n. 70, 111 f.
κῆδος, 9 n. 22
κίναδος, 207
κίναιδος, 193, 204 n. 63, 207 +n. 75, 216 n. 101
κνίψ, 104
κολακεία, 195 n. 30, 196, 212
κολακεύειν, 451
κόλαξ, 178 n. 23, 185 f., 194 ff., 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 218
κρούειν, 92
κῦδος, 53
κωμῳδεῖν, 124, 131

λειτουργία, 181
λιποτάξιον, 175 n. 14
λοιδορία, 121, 126 n. 24, 343
λοιδορεῖν,-εῖσθαι, 97 n. 47, 111, 126, 359
λυπεῖν, 126
λώβη, 10
λωβητός, 10 + n. 24
λωποδύτης, 127, 163

μεγαλοψυχία, 272 n. 52, 274 + n. 61, 274, 278, 365 I f. + n. 3, n. 4, n, 5, 367, 376
μιαρός, 20, 127, 134, 136 f., 172
μικροψυχία, 272 + n. 52, 274 n. 61, 366
μόμφη, 40
μόχθηρε, 133 n. 31
μοχθηρία, 15, 16, 128, 133 ff., 191, 197, 233 n. 2, 326
μοχθηρός, 10 n. 26, 20, 121, 132 ff., 170, 250, 326, 330

μοχθῆρος, 11 n. 26
μόχθος, 11 n. 26, 132f., 336, 337 n. 5, 346, 360

νέμεσις, 248, 257, 258 + n. 13, 262, 269 + n. 46, 2781

ὄγκος, 366
ὀϊζύς, 9 n. 22
ὀνειδίζειν, 86, 100, 122 n. 9
ὄνειδος, 51
ὀχλαγωγός, 342 + n. 24, 344ff., 354, 361

παγκάκιστε, 11ff.
παμπονηρός, 130
πανοῦργος, 20, 134ff., 235 + n. 5
παράδοξα, 355
παρρησία, 3
πατραλοίας, 127, 163, 264
πένθος, 9 n. 22
πενία, 10 n. 26, 108 n. 80, 109
πένομαι, 10 n. 26
περικάθαρμα, 73
πλεονεξία, 181, 214
ποικιλός, 68
πονεῖν, 10 n. 26
πόνηρε, 132 n. 29
πονηρία, 10 n. 26, 14, 16, 108 + n. 80, 130ff., 133, 143 n. 1, 144, 145 + n. 5, 163, 167, 233 n. 2, 323, 326
πονηρόν, τό, 155, 159, 167
πόνηρος, 11n. 26
πονηρός, 10f. n. 26, 20, 129ff., 143 n. 1, 144f., 149, 155f., 187, 192, 198f., 200f., 207, 215, 217 n. 104, 224f., 323, 326, 343 n. 24, 354
πόνος, 9 n. 22, 10 n. 26, 131, 181
πόρνος, 185, 187, 191, 193, 206

ῥήτωρ, 130, 139

σαπρός, 59f., 62, 75, 76 + n. 31
σκνίψ, 104
σκώπτειν, 100, 124ff. + n. 20, n. 21, n. 24, 137f., 357 n. 68
στασιάζειν, 181
συκοφαντεῖν, 170, 327
συκοφάντης, 130, 172, 186 + n. 3, 197ff., 218, 219, 327
συκοφαντία, 172, 219, 223

ταπεινός, 194
τέρας, 69
τίμη, 10
τοιχώρυχος, 127

ὕβρις, 45, 187, 192 n. 20, 249, 366 n. 6
ὕλη, 302 + n. 66
ὑλοφάγος, 104, 111

φαρμακός, 74
φαῦλον, τό, 239
φαῦλος, 102, 120, 181, 255f., 257, 262 n. 26, 264, 266 + n. 36, 267, 275, 333, 343
φαυλότης, 233 n. 2, 255, 272
φθονερός, 47, 50
φθόνος, 4, 21, 23 n. 47, 39, 45 + n. 37, 105, 112, ch. 10 *passim*
as paradigm of badness, 257
φιλοτιμία, 210 n. 84, 214
φλυαρία, 357 + n. 69, 360

χαρίζεσθαι, 189 + n. 14, 190 n. 15, 192
χάρις, 152, 189 n. 14, 192, 196, 251, 261 n. 23
χαυνότης, 366 + n. 6, 376
χλευάζειν, 125 + n. 21

ψόγος, 94 n. 35

ὦ κάκιστα ζῷα, 88
ὠφέλιμον, τό, 148
ὠφέλιμος, 181

II

INDEX OF LATIN TERMS

acerbitas, 234 n. 4
adrogantia, 23, 367 ff., 372, 375, 376 + n. 27, 379 n. 29
adulatio, 416 f. + n, 40
aemulatio, 410 n. 26, 412
audacia, 375 f.

contumelia, 321, 393, 469, 471
contumeliosus, 462, 466 f.
crudelis, 382, 393
crudelitas, 378, 462
cymbalum mundi, 335, 340 ff., 360

damnatio memoriae, 478 + n. 4, 479, 487
deformitas, 467
dilatio, 375
dolo malo, 320, 326 n. 14, 328 ff.
dolus, 22, 323, 326, 331, 400
dolus malus, 22, 320, 328 ff.

exempla, 187, ch. 16 *passim,* ch. 17 *passim*
negative 24
exprobrare, 377, 467

facinus, 323, 437
fallacia, 322, 331
fastidium, 374 + n. 24
fastigium, 372
fastus, 23, 367, 372 ff., 376, 379 n. 29, n. 31, 384, 395
fiducia, 376 + n. 27
flagitium, 439
foeditas, 466
fraus, 330, 331, 400
fucus, 323

imperium, 390
improbus, 122, 324, 332, 416
imprudentia, 234 n. 4
impudentia, 360
inconstantia, 457 f.
indignatio, 267 n. 38
insolentia, 23, 367, 375 ff., 379 n. 31, 393 n. 67
intolerabilis, 379 + n. 30, cf. 382
intumescere, 457
invidia, 116, 404, 405 + n. 11, 408, 409 + n. 20, 410 + n. 25, 411, 425 n. 54, 426, 427

libido, 386 n. 47, 466
livor, 399 n. 1, 408, 409 n. 20, 410, 411, 417 n. 40

magnanimitas, 365 n. 3
magnitudo animi, 375 f.
mala libido, 386 n. 47, 466
male dicere, 122 n. 9, 137
maledicus, 321
maleficium, 325 n. 12
maleficus, 321
malevolentia, 399 n. 1, 408
malevolus, 321
malignitas, 4, 23 f., ch. 15 *passim*
malitia, 4, 22, 23 n. 47, ch. 12 *passim,* 409 + n. 21
malitiosus, 322, 333 f. n. 25
malum, 394 n. 70, 442
malus, 4, 319 f., 321, 323 f., 328 ff., 400
malus/male, 400
mendacium, 323
mirabilia, 350 ff. + n. 52
see also *mirifica*
mirifica, 352, 355, 356
see also *mirabilia*
monstrum, 436, 452

nequam, 4, 324
nequiter, 324
nequitia, 324, 439

obscenitas, 439
obtrectatio, 399 n. 1, 409 n. 20, 410 + n. 25, n. 26, 417 n. 40, 418
opprobrium, 457
ostentatio, 352, 353, 360

perfidus, 332
pestis, 479 n. 8
praemeditatio, 442 ff., 445
praestigiae, 331
pravus, 4, 324
pudor, 407, 408 + n. 18, 416 f. + n. 39, n. 40, 439

scelus, 383 + n. 40, 394, 467 n. 33
spurcus, 479 n. 8
stuprum, 439
subdolus, 323
superbia, 4, 23, 365, 367, 374, 379 ff. + n. 29, 383, 387 ff., 392 ff., 409 + n. 21, 410 n. 24
superbus, superbire, see *superbia*
sycophantia, 323

tumidus, 379 + n. 31, cf. 388 f., 393 n. 67, 457
tumor, 375, 379 n. 31

virtus, 3, 371, 381 n. 34, 395, 410 n. 26
vitiositas, 325 + n. 13
vitiosus, 4
vitium, 235 n. 4, n. 5, 319, 325 + n. 13, 425, 441 n. 31, 466

III

INDEX LOCORUM

Apollonius Dyscolus
Syntax 124.9: 337 n. 5
Achilles
Introductio in Aratum 4.34.11 Maas: **308 f.**
Aelian
De Natura Animalium 6.15: 353; 10.15: 92 n. 31; 10.29: 348; 11.40: 348 f.
Aemilianus fr. 19 Malcovati: 324 n. 11
Aesop 3 Perry: 84; 12 Perry: 67 f.; 27 Perry: 68; 84 Perry: 84; 107 Perry: 84; 112 Perry: 84, 86; 373 Perry: 86; Test. 25 Perry: 100
Aeschines
1 (*Against Timarchus*) *passim* 188; 190; 192 n. 22; 193 n. 23; **220 ff.**; 1.7–11: 220; 1.10–11: 219; 1.11: 222; 1.18–19: 221; 1.20: 219; 1.28–32: 219; 1.30–31: 187; 1.33–35: 220; 1.33–35: 223; 1.34: 220; 1.41: 187; 1.55–157: 193; 1.134–157: 193 n. 24; 1.154–155: 187; 1.185: 187; 1.195: 221 n. 110; 2.145: 219; 3.4: 223; 3.139: 197; 3.148: 175 n. 16; 3.152: 175 n. 16
Ammianus Marcellinus 14.11.26: 379 n. 31
Ammonius Περὶ ὁμοίων καὶ διαφόρων λέξεων 326: 11 n. 26
Anaxagoras 59B1 DK: 290 n. 22; B14 DK = Simplic. *in Phys.* 164.24: 290 n. 22
Andocides 1.99–100: 207; 1.100: 219; 1.99–101: 191, 221 n. 110
[Andocides] 4.20–23: 222; 4.21–22: 217 n. 102
Antiphanes 80 KA = Athen. 238a–b: 196 n. 38; 193 KA 8–10: 196; 193 KA = Athen. 238d–f: 196 n. 39
Antiphon 6.1–13: 222 n. 113; 6.12–14: 210; fr. 66: 203
Antoninus Liberalis 22.2: 113; 22.4 f.: 111 ff.; 24: 109
Apion fr. 46 Neitzel: 345 n. 34; fr. 97 Neitzel: 345 n. 34; fr. 132 Neitzel: 344; fr. 134 Neitzel: 345
Apuleius
Florida 15.26: 346 n. 35
Aristides 40.761: 122 n. 9
Aristophanes
Acharnians 77–79: 217 n. 103; 88: 201; 117–122: 203 + n. 62; 134–166: 201; 182: 136; 282: 136; 285: 136; 500: 138 f.; 503: 123; 515–519: 170 f.; 557: 136; 626–664: 138 n. 40; 631: 123; 647–651: 123; 649: 126; 655: 124; 664: 206 n. 73; 699: 130; 704–710: 200; 716: 206; 716–717: 217 n. 103; 818–829: 171; 842–844: 202; 842–847: 207; 844: 201; 854: 203; 908–958: 171
Birds 85: 127; 137–142: 192 n. 20; 289: 201; 493: 133 n. 31; 703–707: 191 n. 19; 823: 202 + n. 55; 831: 203; 1296: 204; 1373–1409: 297 n. 43; 1374 ff.: 121 n. 7; 1410–1469: 171; 1475: 201; 1556–1558: 175 n. 16; 1564: 204; 1648: 132 n. 29
Clouds passim 122; 31: 202 n. 57; 104: 204; 169–173: 95 n. 40; 351: 201; 353: 201; 353–354: 175 n. 16; 355: 203; 399: 201; 400: 201; 540: 125; 553–554: 128; 672–675: 201; 672–680: 175

n. 16; 673: 201; 685–691: 202; 889ff.: 193 n. 23, **216ff.**; 899: 127; 909–911: 127; 1021–1022: 134; 1065–1066: 132; 1085–1104: 191; 1089–1104: 217 n. 103; 1325: 136; 1327: 136; 1327–1332: 127; 1332: 136; 1388: 136; 1430–1431: 95 n. 40; 1465: 137

Daitaleis fr. 205 KA: 206; fr. 205.2 KA: 203; fr. 228 KA: 222; fr. 244 KA: 206

Ecclesiazusae passim 20; 111–114: 217 n. 103; 177–178: 130 + n. 26; 185: 130; 206–207: 179; 307–310: 179; 316–317: **92**; 330: 121 n. 7; 380–382: 179; 595: 95 n. 40; 618–619: 134; 625: 134; 629: 134; 705: 134; 730–876: ch 7 *passim*, esp. **178ff.**; 1078: 134

Fragmenta fr. 295 KA: 204; fr. 424 KA: 130; fr. 452 KA: 197; 459 KA: 211; 552 KA: 204; fr. 571: 95 n. 40; 584 KA: 204

Frogs passim 20; 35: 134; 48: 203; 57: 203; 58: 125 n. 20; 71: 143; 72: 143 n. 1; 80: 136; 96: 143; 106: 43 n. 1; 153: 121 n. 7; 155–158: 137; 354–371: 138; 366–367: 138f.; 374–375: 125; 391–395: **137f.**, 138; 416–421: 197; 416ff.: 138; 417: 125; 421: 133; 422: 203; 465–466: 136; 569: 206 n. 73; 588: 197; 674–737: 138, 224 n. 123; 686: 137; 686–687: 138 n. 40; 710: 130; 731: 131; 770–813: **163ff.**; 773: 127; 781: 136; 836–839: 157 n. 26; 852: 132 n. 29; 857–858: 126; 862: 305 + n. 78; 876–877: 161 n. 32; 905–1097: **149ff.**; 907–970: 159f.; 922–926: 157 n. 26; 932–934: 149; 937–979: **162f.**; 951–954: 148; 971–979: 149; 980–991: 149f.; 1008: 147; 1009: 148; 1009–1010: 139; 1011: 133; 1014–1017: 176; 1015: 136; 1019: 148; 1019–1029: **150ff.**; 1030–1036: 148; 1039–1088: 153f.; 1040–1044: **160**; 1043–1044: 120; 1043–1055: **153ff.**; 1044: 145 n. 4; 1050: 162 n. 33; 1053–1054: 145 n. 3; 1056–1060: **160f.**; 1059: 157 n. 26, 161 n. 32; 1063: 145; 1063–1088: **156ff.**; 1071: 162 n. 33; 1087–1088: 211; 1109–1118: 15 n. 19; 1109–1118: **164ff.**; 1175: 133 n. 31; 1198–1199: 103; 1365–1406: 162; 1396: 162 n. 33; 1398: 162 n. 33; 1422: 206 n. 74; 1437: 121 n. 7; 1456: 130 + n. 26; 1482–1499: 136; 1520: 136

Knights passim 206 n. 73; 2: 128; 125: 136; 167: 218; 180–181: 131; 186: 131; 247–250: 134; 249–250: 135 n. 33; 255–257: 174 n. 11; 303: 136; 337: 131; 346–350: 213; 423–428: 217 n. 103; 427: 218; 442–444: 175 n. 16; 520–525: **125f.**; 721: 218; 730–740: 417 n. 103; 736–742: 218; 823: 136; 831: 136; 874–880: 217 n. 103, 218; 876–879: 219; 902: 185 n. 2; 956–958: 201; 1194: 185 n. 2; 1224: 136; 1241: 218; 1256: 202; 1264: 130; 1267: 203; 1269: 126; 1274–1275: 126, 130 n. 26; 1281: 130; 1284: 130, 134; 1290–1299: 201; 1302–1304: 207; 1304: 133; 1321: 134; 1358: 200 n. 54; 1359–1361: 174 n. 11; 1369–1372: 175 n. 16; 1374: 203 + n. 62

Holkades passim 200 n. 53; fr. 422 KA: 203 n. 62; fr. 424 KA: 200f., 217 n. 103

Lysistrata 270–271: 205 n. 69; 309: 92; 350: 131; 351: 130 n. 26; 397: 137; 622: 203; 689–695: **97f.**; 1092: 203; 1105: 204 n. 63;1160: 133

Peace passim **94ff.** + n. 36; 2: 127; 43–48: 94 + n. 38; 74: 96; 75:

96; 76: 96; 81: 96; 121: 96; 126: 96; 129–130: 94; 133–134: 94; 137: 96; 146–148: 96; 149: 95; 154: 96; 157–158: 95; 173: 125 n. 19; 181: 96; 182–187: 136; 283: 134; 303: 128; 391: 133 n. 31; 446: 201; 651–656: 126; 653: 206 n. 73; 673–676: 201; 684: 130; 751: 124; 752–759: 200; 762–763: 192 n. 22, 217 n. 102; 765–774: 125; 812: 137; 902–921: 96; 1172–1190: 128

Thesmophoriazusae 85: 123; 167: 128; 167–169: 158; 168: 134; 169: 128; 182: 123; 235: 203; 475: 123; 574–929: 203; 610: 127; 780–781: 133; 785–813: 129; 801: 129; 836–837: **129 f.**

Wasps 19: 201; 42–52: 201; 74: 202; 76: 206; 192: 132; 193–195: 132; 197: 174 n. 11; 243: 132 n. 28; 325: 202 + n. 55; 418: 201; 418–419: 201; 466: 202; 505: 174 n. 11; 542: 125 n. 20; 567: 125 n. 19; 592: 201; 599–600: 201; 666–667: 201; 686–691: 206; 787–789: 203; 947–948: 201; 977: 132 n. 29; 1023–1028: 192 n. 22, 217 n. 102; 1025–1026: 124; 1029–1030: 126; 1030–1037: 200; 1036–1042: 200 n. 53; 1060–1061: 210 f.; 1068–1070: 217 n. 103; 1114–1121: **176 f.**; 1182–1185: 97 + n. 47; 1183: 95 n. 40; 1187: 203; 1220: 202; 1220–1242: 201; 1243: 202; 1265–1274: 202 f.; 1267: 202; 1274: 131; 1299–1325: 204; 1399–1405: 97; 1435–1440: 97; 1448: 96

Wealth 101–110: 128 f.; 109: 133; 149–156: 187; 149–159: 191; 159: 133; 502: 131; 557: 124; 706: 95 n. 40; 850–958: 171; 876: 134; 901–925: 174; 920: 130; 939: 130; 1145: 134

Archilochus fr. 172 W: 115 + n. 96; fr. 230 W: 103

Archippus 48 KA: 207 n. 74

Aristarchus

On Choruses fr. 103–112 Wehrli: 299 n. 48

Aristophon 5 KA = Athen. 238b–c: 196 n. 39

Aristotle

Constitution of Athens 12.3–4: **241 f.**; 24.3: 212; 29.5: 177 n. 18; 35.3: 173 n. 9, 224; 42.2: 222 n. 113; 43: 219; 43.5: 223 n. 120, 224; 44.3: 223; 50.2: 219, 222; 59.3: 219; 62.2: 213 n. 93; 62.3: 213

Categories 10: 261 n. 21; 10a1–2: 238; 10a7: 238; 11b18: 237; 12a13–20: **239**; 12a26–13b27: 237; 12a27: 236; 13a22–31 Minio-Paluello: 239; 36: 236

Divisions 61.23: 250

Eudemian Ethics 1221a28–31: 246; 1221a9: 246, 247; 1223a25–27: 277 n. 73; 1233b19–25: 269 n. 45; 1237b28: 245; 1245b38–39: 246

Metaphysics 1018a25: 261 n. 21; 1020b17–20 Ross: 250 f.; 1025a6: 234; bk. Z: 292 n. 30; 1032b14: 302 + n. 65; 1035a17–22: 302 n. 66; 1078b1–5: 295 n. 36; 1093b26: 246

Movement of Animals 700b22: 277 n. 73

Nicomachean Ethics 1095a19: 245; 1096a1: 246; 1102a26–32: 272; 1103a14–15: 276 n. 69; 1103a14–17: 272; 1103a17–18: 272 n. 55; 1103a3–10: 276 n. 69; 1103a14–b25: 239; 1103b1–2: 273; 1105b21–23: 255 n. 3; 1106a9–10: 239; 1106a25–b3: 268; 1106b34: 252; 1106b36: 237; 1107a2–3: 268 n. 43; 1107a9–11: 255 n. 1, 262 n. 25; 1107a9–12: 269 n. 46; 1108a29–33: 194; 1108b1–5:

269 n. 46; 1108b11–12: 268 n. 43; 1110b27–30: 132; 1113b: 326; 1114a6: 326; 1114a20–22: 326; 1114b4: 248; 1115b11–1116a9: 268; 1119b31–32: 255 n. 1; 1121b1–4: 195; 1123a34–1125a35: 365 n. 3; 1123b1–2: 366 n. 4; 1125a1: 194; 1125a8: 245; 1125a19: 247; 1125a28: 248; 1127a6–10: 194; 1128a22–25: 120; 1128a30–31: 126 n. 24; 1129a20–22: 250; 1129b23: 244; 1131a9: 244; 5.8: 330; 1135b25: 330; 1135b26–31: 330; 1135b33: 330; 1138a: 327; 1138b22: 234 n. 4; 1138b35–1139a1: 276 n. 69; 1140b25–29: 272; 1144b30–32: 272 f.; 1148b15–1149a20: 190 n. 17; 1150a1–5: 255 n. 1; 1150b1–3: 247 n. 18; 1159a15–20: 195; 1159a21: 247; 1167b10: 181; 1171b24: 247; 1176b29: 246; 1381b21–23: 274

On the Soul 403a10–11: 301 f., 302 n. 58; 1.5 *passim*: 305 n. 79; 410a18–21: 305 n. 79; 412a17: 305 n. 79; 412a8–9: 302 + n. 62; 429a11–12: 302 + n. 61; 430a12–13: 302 n. 60; 430a22–23: 301 + n. 56; 414b2: 277 n. 73

Parts of Animals 668b5: 249

Physics 192a15: 248; 246a10: 237

Poetics 1448a17–18: 119; 1448b23–28: 123; 1448b24–1449a5: 88 n. 15; 1449a8: 302 + n. 62; 1449a8–9: 303 n. 67; 1449a31–37: 119 f.; 1449a32: 333; 1449b23–28: 119; 1450a4–5: 305 n. 77; 1450a15: 304 n. 74, 305 n. 77; 1450a17: 244; 1450a30–31: 303 n. 67; 1450b34–1451a6: **293 ff.**; 1450b36–1451a3: 311; 1451a10: 312 n. 96; 1451a6–15: 296 + n. 39; 1451a31–35: 304 f.; 1451a31–35: 305 n. 76; 1452a19–20: 305 n. 77; 1452b29: 303 n. 67; 1452b31: 305 n. 77; 1452b33: 303 n. 67; 1453a8: 119; 1453a15–16: 119; 1453b32: 304 + n. 72; 1454b7: 304 n. 72; 1455b8: 304 + n. 72; 1456a7–8: 302 n. 63; 1458b21: 294 n. 34; 1458b31: 130; 1460b21: 303 n. 67; 1460b24–25: 303 n. 67; ch. 26: 293 n. 31; 1462a11: 303 n. 67; 1462b1: 293 n. 31

Politics 1255b36: 246; 1263b23: 194; 1269b10: 247; 1278b27–28: 247; 1285a37–40: **242 f.**; 1285b3: 243; 1292a17–25: 194 n. 28; 1295b9–10: 249; 1308a19–20: 248 f.; 1330a36: 243; 1330b32–1331a24: 244 n. 14

Prior Analytics 68a40–b7: 190 n. 15

Rhetoric 1.2: 256 n. 4; 1354a15: 304 n. 72; 1354a16–18: 256 n. 4; 1354a24–26: 256 n. 4; 1355a29 ff.: 276 n. 69 + n. 70; 1356a1–4: 255; 1356a4–13: 275 n. 67; 1356a14–15: 255; 1360b18–22: 271 n. 50; 1362a5–6: 271 n. 50; 1368b30–1369a6: 277; 1369a15–19: 277; 1369b26–28: 277; 1370a18: 277; 1371a21–23: 194; 1378a19–21: 256; 1378a23–26: 262 n. 24; 1378a30–b2: 277; 1379a29: 125 n. 21; 1381b7: 246; 1382a12–13: 277 n. 74; 1382a13: 238; 1384b8: 246; 1384b10: 246; 1385a14–15: 265 n. 34; 1385a24–25: 251; 1385b7–10: 265 n. 34; 1385b13–14: 258; 1386a8: 251; 1386b8–27: 258; 1386b9: 248; 1386b10–11: 262; 1386b11–12: 256 n. 8, 262, 264; 1386b18–20: 262; 1386b19–20: 270 n. 50; 1386b20–21: 262; 1386b25–1387a3: **263 f.**; 1386b25–33: 268 n. 44; 1386b26–28: 248;

1386b33–1387a1: 262 + n. 25; 1387a3–5: 260 n. 20, 276 n. 71; 1387b: 271 n. 52; 1387b14: 248; 1387b16–18: 264 n. 31; 1387b16–20: 248; 1387b17–21: 260 n. 20, 276 n. 71; 1387b23–27: 270; 1387b26: 272 n. 52; 1387b26 ff.: 271 f.; 1388a9–12: 272; 1388a18–24: 271; 1388a21: 271 n. 52; 1388a24–27: 264 n. 33; 1388a27–30: 260 n. 20, 276; 1388a32–38: 259; 1388a33–35: 256 n. 8; 1388a34–38: 262 + n. 25; 1388a38–b3: 272 n. 52; 1388b3–7: 272 n. 52; 1388b20: 261 n. 23; 1388b22–23: 259; 1388b22–26: 263; 1388b26–28: 263 n. 28; 1388b29–30: 255 n. 3; 1389a16: 245; 1389b20: 249; 1389b20–21: 245; 1389b8: 249; 1391a18: 249; 3.9: 294 n. 33; 3.12: 294 n. 33; 1416b10: 245; 1450a4–5: 304 n. 74; 1452a19–20: 304 n. 74

Topics 104a: 1240; 104a22–23: 240; 112b–113a: 240; 113b36: 249; 119a39: 240; 136b27–28: 241; 157b20: 250; 158a25: 241; 161a6: 241

[Aristotle]

On Virtue and Vices 1251b3: 245 n. 17

Problems 4.26: 190 n. 17; 887b23: 247; 952b31: 244

Aristoxenus fr. 124 Wehrli: 297 n. 43

Athenaeus

Deipnosophistae 16e: 354; 16e–17b: 354 n. 57; 171d: 185 n. 2, 195 n. 33; 229a: 195 n. 37; 234d–235e: 185 n. 2; 235f–240c: 195; 237d–f: 196 n. 38; 238a–b: 196 n. 38; 238b–c: 196 n. 39; 238d–f: 196 n. 39; 239a: 196 n. 38; 239b–f: 196 n. 38; 239f–240b: 196 n. 39; 242e–244a: 204 n. 67; 294f: 338 n. 7; 425a–b: 185 n. 2; 425a–b: 195 + n. 33; 425a–b; 528f–530c: 482 n. 22; 632a–b: 297 n. 43; 680d: 346

Axionicus 6 KA: 196 n. 39

Bacchylides 14.1–7: 53; 14.1–11: **37 f.**

Caesar

de Bello Civili 1.32.6: 378; 1.85.4: 371; 3.59.3: 371 f.

de Bello Gallico 1.33.5: 370, 379 n. 30; 1.46.4: 370; 7.52.3: 370

Callimachus

Hymn to Artemis 124–128: 104 n. 66

Hymn to Delos 316–326: 102; 326: 103

Iambi 1.26–28: 105; 4.84: 103, 112 n. 91; 13: **101 ff.**, 103 n. 64, 104 n. 66; 13.54–57: 102; 13.58–62: 102 f., 105; 13.65–66: 103 f.; 13.66: 110 n. 83

Epigrams 27: 160 n. 29

Cassius Dio 59.6.1: 451; 59.13.6: 467 n. 33; 59.19.7–8: 452 n. 2; 59.28.5–7: 470 n. 38; 59.28.9: 485 n. 50; 59.29.2–4: 466 n. 32; 59.30.1c: 468 n. 36; 59.30: 471 n. 40; 79.24.4: 481 n. 17; 79.29.2: 479 + n. 8; 79.30.2: 482 n. 24; 79.32.4: 481 n. 17; 80.1.1: 482 + n. 25; 80.11.1: 482 n. 28, 484 n. 41; 80.11: 482 + n. 26; 80.13.1–4: 485 + n. 49; 80.14.3–4: 484 + n. 38; 80.15.1–4: 484 n. 40; 80.16.7: 484 + n. 42; 80.9.3: 482 n. 28, 484 n. 42

Cato

de Agri Cultura 144: 329; 145: 329 n. 19

Fragmenta 17: 324

Catullus 6: 373; 6.1–3: 373 n. 21; 15: 413 n. 34; 16: 413 n. 34; 47.2: 342 n. 22; 55: 373 + n. 20; 55.13–14: 372; 58b: 373 + n. 20;

Charisius 411.23–25 Barwick: 379 n. 29

Cicero

Brutus 204: 425 n. 52

pro Caecina 10: 327 n. 16
pro Caelio 47: 440
pro Cluentio 70: 331; 72: 331; 109: 379 n. 30
Epistulae ad Familiares 9.19.1: 334 n. 25
de Finibus Bonorum et Malorum 3.17 ff.: 454 n. 6; 3.39: 325 + n. 13; 3.40: 325
de Inventione 1.22: 368 n. 14; 1.42: 379 n. 29; 1.102: 324 n. 12; 1.105: 379 n. 29; 2.108: 325 n. 12
de Natura Deorum 3.72: 331; 3.74: **331 f.**; 3.75: 332
de Officiis 1.10: 328; 3.37: 332 n. 23; 3.57: 332; 3.57–61: 332 n. 23; 3.60: **331 f.**; 3.64: 332; 3.71: 332 n. 23; 3.96–115: 332 n. 23
de Oratore 1.31: 412 n. 30; 2.1: 422; 2.12: 422 n. 49; 2.50: 444 n. 39; 3.25: 425 n. 52
Orator 159: 347; 160: 347 n. 37
Philippicae 2.84: 379 n. 29; 3.9: 382; 8.21: 379 n. 29; 13.14: 381 n. 32
pro Quinctio 38: 327 n. 16
pro Rabirio 2: 342 n. 22
de Re Publica 1.62: 382; 4.10: 122 n. 10; 4.10 fr. 11: 122 n. 9
pro Q. Roscio comoedo 20–21: 331 n. 22
Tusculanae Disputationes 3.28–29: 442 n. 35; 3.52: 442 n. 35; 3.55: 447 n. 45; 3.59–60: 447 n. 45; 3.73: 447 n. 45; 4.17: 410 n. 26; 4.29: 325 n. 13, 457; 4.30: 325 n. 13; 4.34: 325 + n. 13; 4.46: 410 n. 26; 4.56: 410 n. 26; 4.77: 320 f.; 4.80: 76 n. 32
In Verrem 1.55: 331; 2.2.66: 331; 2.3.192: 327 n. 16; 5.4: 327 n. 16
CIL X 6569: 482 n. 24; XV 7326: 482 n. 24
Clement of Alexandria
Stromata 1.101: 348 n. 39
[Clement of Alexandria]
Homilies 4.6: 344 n. 27; 5.2: 344 n. 27; 5.3–8: 344 n. 27; 5.27: 344 n. 27; 5.29: 344 n. 27; 6.10: 344 n. 27
Columella 3.10.18: 400
Comica Adespota fr. 123 KA: 206; fr. 137 KA: 216 n. 101;
Cratinus fr. 82 KA: 201; fr. 108: 201; fr. 208 KA: 203; fr. 209 KA: 207; fr. 214 KA (*Pytine*): 205; fr. 215 KA (*Pytine*): 204; fr. 227 KA: 202; fr. 283 KA: 207;

Demosthenes 2.30: 181 n. 28; 4.7: 181 n. 28; 8.21–24: 181; 9.74: 181; 10.28: 177 n. 18, 181 n. 28; 14.15: 180 f.; 18.20: 327 n. 15; 19.113: 175 n. 16; 21.8: 222; 21.8–9: 219; 21.10–11: 222; 21.10–12: 220; 21.36–37: 226 n. 125; 21.147: 222; 21.175: 220, 222; 21.193: 211 n. 85; 22.21–32: 191; 22.30: 221 n. 110; 22.30–36: 219; 24.112: 213 n. 96; 25.8: 172; 25.28: 171; 25.32: 171; 25.49–52: 171; 25.54–55: 171; 25.60–63: **172 ff.**; 25.82: 171; 25.95: 171 f.; 25–26: 171; 39.17: 175 n. 14; 42.25: 177 n. 18; 58.11: 223 n. 119; 58: 224 n. 122
Dinarchus 1.12: 175 n. 16
Dio Chrysostom 33.9: 122 n. 9
Diodorus (com.) 2 KA = Athen. 239b–f: 196 n. 38
Diodorus Siculus 2.23.1–27.3: 482 + n. 22; 16.92.3: 309 n. 91
Diogenes Laertius 7.52: 456 n. 12; 7.87: 454 n. 7; 9.54: 201
Dionysius of Halicarnassus
On Imitation 6.2: 121 n. 8

Empedocles 31B39 DK: 309 n. 89
Etymologicum Magnum p. 329.13: 349
Eubulus 72 KA = Athen. 239a: 196 n. 38
Euclid 8

Eupolis
Dêmoi passim 218 n. 105; fr. 104 KA: 217 + n. 103;
Fragmenta fr. 35: 128; fr. 61 (in Σ Pl. *Ap.* 23e): 205 n. 69; fr. 80 KA (*Baptai*): 197; fr. 90 KA (*Baptai*): 206; fr. 99.22–34 KA: 206, 207; fr. 99.79–120 KA: 171; fr. 219 KA: 185 n. 2, 195 n. 33, 219; fr. 222 KA (*Poleis*): 203; fr. 235 KA: 201; fr. 253 KA (*Poleis*): 204; fr. 352: 201; fr. 386: 122 n. 11; fr. 395: 122 n. 11
Kolakes 204
Marikas 218 n. 105
Euripides
Bacchae 820: 257 n. 9
Bellerophon passim 96
Chrysippus (*TGF* 5.2 no. 78, frr. 838–844): 192 n. 20
Cyclops 689: 12 n. 31
Fragments 57.1 N.: 11 n. 28; fr. 565 (*Oeneus*): 143 n. 1; 666.1 N.: 11 n. 28; 939.1 N.: 11 n. 28
Hercules Furens passim 2 n. 5; 731: 11 n. 28
Hippolytus 682–694: **12 f.**
Ion 834–835: 266 n. 36
Iphigenia at Aulis 327: 321; 329: 321; 331: 321
Medea 465–472: **12 f.**; 488 ff.: 13
Orestes 10: 42 n. 30
Suppliants 513: 11 n. 28
Eusebius
Praeparatio Evangelica 10.10.16: 337
Eustathius
ad Iliadem 3.824.21: 301 + n. 54; 992.55–60: 338 n. 10
ad Odysseam 4.563: 350; 1.396.23: 301 n. 54
Evanthius 16: 122 n. 9

FGrHist 616: 348 n. 40; 616 F 8: 355 n. 59; 616 F 9: 355 n. 59; 616 F 20: 355 n. 59; 616 T 3: 336 n. 3; T 11.b: 338 n. 7; T 4.c: 338 n. 7
FHG III: 506–516: 348 n. 40
[Fronto]
De differentiis Gramm. Lat. VII 523.13 Keil: 367 n. 10
Fulgentius Mythographus
Mythologiae 2.3: 399

Gellius
Noctes Atticae 5.10: 201; 5.14: **352 f.**; 5.14.1: 336 n. 3, 337; 5.14.2: 339, 348 + n. 39; 5.14.3: 343, 353; 5.14.4: 353 f.; 6.8.1: 337; 6.8.1–5: **353 f.**; 6.11.9: 324 f. + n. 11; 7.1–6 = SVF 2.1169: 456 n. 13; 7.8.1: 336 n. 3, 337, 339; 10.10.2: 349
Grillius *ad* Cic. *Inv.* 1.22: 369

Harpocrates p. 76, 9: 185 n. 2;
Hermippus of Smyrna
apud D.L. 2.38: 205
Herodian (gramm.)
Gramm.Gr. III 1.197: 11 n. 26
Herodian (hist.) 5.5.3–4: 482 f., 483 n. 29, 486 n. 51; 5.5.5–7: 483 + n. 30; 5.5.8–10: 483 n. 31; 5.6.10: 484 + n. 43; 5.7.2: 483 + n. 31; 5.7.8: 484 + n. 43; 5.8.8: 479 + n. 8;
Herodotus 2.118.1: 355 n. 57; 2.134: 67, 87
[Herodotus]
Life of Homer 32.447–448: 2 n. 5
Hesiod
Works and Days 25: 271 n. 51; 104 n. 66; 202: 87 n. 11
Theogony 99: 308 n. 87
Hesychius μ 285: 207; *s.v.* Sesellisai: 202 n. 55
Himerius
Orationes 13.5: 61 n. 10
Hipponax fr. 39 W: **108 f.**; fr. 70 W: 91 n. 28; fr. 78 W: 93; fr. 92 W: **89 ff.**, 105 n. 70; fr. 92.10: 95
Hirtius
de Bello Gallico 8.1: 370; 8.1.3: 370 n. 17, 371; 8.1.9: 370 n. 17, 371 n. 17

Homer
Iliad 1.317: 342 n. 22; 2.87–90: 90 + n. 27; 2.214: 105 n. 70; 2.247: 105 n. 70; 2.256: 105 n. 70; 2.469–473: 90f.; 8.192: 342 n. 22; 8.509: 342 n. 22; 11.27: 308; 15.468: 2 n. 5; 16.80–81: 90 n. 25; 16.259–265: 105 n. 70; 16.361: 91; 16.641–643: 91; 17.424–425: 342 n. 22; 23.483: 242; 23.724: 470 n. 38; 24.522–527: 9; 24.527–540: 2 n. 4, **9ff.**
Odyssey 1.33: 9 n. 21; 1.33ff.: 2 n. 4; 5.66: 345; 6.187–190: 33 n. 12; 6.306: 308 n. 87; 8.186–201: 91 n. 28; 13.108: 308 n. 87; 14.463–466: 87 n. 11; 14.508: 87 n. 11; 21.395: 104; 24.256: 90 n. 25
Homeric Hymn to Demeter 202–204: 107 n. 77; 206–211: 108
Homeric Hymn to Hermes passim 111; 55–58: 114f.
Horatius
Ars Poetica 284: 121 n. 9
Carmina 1.1: 393; 1.1.36: 393; 1.8: 373; 2.16: 419 n. 43; 3.1: 413 n. 34; 3.30: 388 n. 55; 3.30.10–12: 389 n. 57; 3.30.14–16: **387f.**
Epistulae 1.15.31: 342 n. 22; 2.1: 424 n. 50; 2.1.88–89: 399; 2.1.208–213: 413f.
Sermones 1.4.1–7: 122 n. 9; 1.4.3–5: 122; 1.6.93–97: **373f.**
Hyperides 4.3: 222; 4.7: 122 n. 13

IG I^3 61.34: 201; 68.5: 201; 69.3–4: 201; 79.1: 202; 227: 201
IG ii^2 1250: 211; 2318.7: 126 n. 22; 2318.46–48: 126 n. 22; 2325: 126 n. 22; 2325.48: 126 n. 22; 2645: 204 n. 63
IG Urb. Rom. 216.4: 124 n. 18
ILS 478 (= *CIL* X 6569): 482 n. 24; 8687 (= *CIL* XV 7326): 482 n. 24

Isidore
Origines 10.248: 380
Isocrates 8.4: 195 n. 32; 14.314–315: 223 n. 116; 15.314: 219; 15.314–315: 223 n. 117
Iustinus
Historiae Philippicae 39.2.1: 379 n. 31

Josephus
Against Apion 1.11: 356 n. 66; 1.12: 356 n. 66; 1.160: 341; 2: **355ff.** + nn.; 2.2: 337 n. 6, 355; 2.3: 338, 342f.; 2.4: 343; 2.10: 354 n. 56; 2.13: 354; 2.14: 337 n. 6, 354 n. 56; 2.15: 337 n. 6; 2.15–17: 354 n. 55; 2.26: 337 n. 6; 2.28: 337 n. 6; 2.29: 337 n. 6, 339; 2.41: 337 n. 6, 339; 2.49: 339; 2.52–113: 343 n. 25; 2.65: 337 n. 6; 2.85: 337 n. 6; 2.109: 337 n. 6; 2.111: 343; 2.12: 337 n. 6; 2.121: 354; 2.135: 339f.; 2.135–136: 340; 2.136: 343 n. 24, 354; 2.137: 337 n. 6; 2.138: 337 n. 6; 2.138–141: 343 n. 26; 2.147: 355
Antiquitates Judaicae 18.257: 340, 359; 18.258: 359; 18.259: 340 n. 17
Juvenal
Satires 11.171ff.: 439 n. 24

Labeo
Digesta 4.3.1.2: 333 n. 24
Laus Pisonis 129–132: 373 n. 22
Life of Aeschylus 332.4–5: 298 n. 44; 333.6–11: 298
Life of Aesop 19f., ch. 3 *passim*; G 127: 99; GW 135–139 Perry: 84; G 142: 85 n. 8
Livy 1.46.6: 386; 1.46–48: 383; 1.49: **384**; 1.49.1: 384 n. 44; 1.57.9–10: 385 n. 47; 1.58.5: 386 n. 48; 1.59.2: 386; 2.42.1: 404 n. 10; 3.63.5: **405f.**; 3.65.5: 408 n. 19; 5.20.1–3: **404f.**; 5.22.1: 404 n. 10; 8.12.11: 404 n. 10; 10.46.14: 404 n.

10; 34.34.7: 404 n. 10; 37.49.1–4: **377 f.**; 38.50: 408 n. 19, 416 + n. 39; 38.50.2–3: **406 f.**; 39.9.6: 404 n. 10; 45.35.9: 404 n. 10
[Longinus]
On the Sublime 5.1: 312 n. 95; 9.4: 312 n. 94, 313 n. 97; 9.6: 312 f. + n. 94, 313 n. 97; 10.3: 313; 17.2: 312 + n. 95; 30.1: 312 n. 95; 35.3: 312 n. 95; 39.3: 312 n. 95; 40.1: 312 n. 95; 40.4: 313
Lucian
Anacharsis 22: 122 n. 9
Fisherman 25: 122 n. 9
On the Parasite 195: n. 31
Lucretius
de Rerum Natura 3.17: 309 f.; 3.25–30: 309 f.
Lycurgus 1.143: 177
Lysias 3.3–6: 191 n. 18; 10.1: 219; 12.5: 173 n. 9, 224; 13.65: 219, 223 n. 116, 223 n. 120, 224; 14: 175 + n. 14; 14.25: 197, 205; 14.25–26: 207 n. 74; 16.13: 175 f.; 16.15: 176; 20.23: 175, 181 n. 28; 21.4: 222; 25: 225; 25.19–20: 224; 25.25–26: 203; 25–27: 224; fr. 53: 121 n. 7

Magnes (V 626–631 KA): 125 n. 22
Martial 1.34.5–8: 439 n. 24; 4.86.7: 418 n. 42; 5.28–29: 414; 7.26.9–10: **418 f.**
Menander fr. 545 Koerte: 327
Mnesiepes Inscription E_1coll. III, 43–44: 99

Nepos
Alcibiades 1.1–4: 235 n. 5;
Dion 6.4: 234 n. 4; 6.5: 234 n. 4; 7: 234 n. 4; 8.3: 234 n. 4; 9.6: 234 n. 4
Nicander
Alexipharmaca 115: 106; 128–133: **106 ff.**
Fragments 6: 109
Theriaca 484–487: 109 f.; 754–755: 106

Old Oligarch *see* [Xenophon] *Respublica Atheniensium*
Ovid
Amores 3.14.7 ff.: 439 n. 24
Fasti 1.419: 379 n. 29; 6.595: 383 n. 42
Metamorphoses 7.353–356: 110 n. 84
Tristia 4.1.101: 415

Pap. Scol. Ital. 1094, p. 165 Callimachus 1 (Pfeiffer): 100 n. 55
P. Herc. 1074a fr. 1.27–fr. 2.1 = cols. 132–133 Janko: 303 n. 71; 1676 col. 7.7–17: 303 n. 70
P. Oxy. 1800, fr. 2.32–46 = Aesop *Test.* 25 Perry: 100
Pindar
Isthmian Odes 4.20: 44
Nemean Odes 4.40: 53; 5.14–18: 39, 40; 5.25–26: 39; 7: 50, 52; 7.11–16: 41 n. 24; 7.20 ff.: 40; 7.20–27: **51 ff.**; 7.102–104: 113; 8: 50, 52 + n. 44; 8.21–26: **50 ff.**; 8.23: 45 n. 37; 8.32–34: **50 ff.**; 8.33: 53; 8.39: 40, 51; 9.6–7: 41 n. 24; 10.72: 36
Olympian Odes 1: 42 n. 30, 44, 49, 54; 1.115: 40 n. 20; 1.32–34: 34; 1.47: 42; 1.53: 42; 1.54–64: 42; 1.64: 35; 1.86: 53; 2.86–88: 53; 9.1–2: 94 n. 35; 9.28: 34; 10.39–42: 35
Pythian Odes 2: 38, **43 ff.**; 2.21–24: 45; 2.31–32: 44; 2.35: 35; 2.37: 35; 2.49–56: 43 ff.; 2.52–56: 46 n. 40, 94 n. 35, 113; 2.53: 107 n. 75; 2.54–56: 104; 2.73–78: 46 f.; 2.81: 53; 2.81–82: 37 f.; 2.86–88: 37; 2.88–92: 47 f.; 3.12–13: 35; 3.27: 35; 3.35: 35; 3.81: 10 n. 23; 4: 49; 4.283–292: 48 f.; 4.293–297: 49; 8.32: 103 n. 63; 8.81–87: 40; 8.82: 40 n. 20; 8.96–97: 30; 11: 49; 11.22: 39; 11.25–29: 39; 11.29–30: 50; 11.53–58: **49**; 12.23: 288 n. 10

Petronius
Satyricon 138: 89
Phaedrus 3 pr. 33–40: 87 n. 10; 4 pr. 15–20: **417 ff.**; 4 pr. 15–20: 411 n. 27; 4 pr. 16: 424 n. 50
Pherecrates fr. 143 KA: 203; fr. 150 KA: 185 n. 2; 164 KA: 206
Philo
Legatio ad Gaium 22: 451 f.; 115: 359 n. 70, 359 n. 71; 133: 359 n. 70; 166–171: 359 n. 70; 180: 359 n. 70; 360: 340 n. 17
In Flaccum 21–24: 359 n. 70; 92–103: 359 n. 70
Philostratus
Life of Apollonius 6.19: 160 n. 29
Phrynichus 60 KA = Athen. 229a: 1195 n. 37
Plato
Apology 18d: 122; 19c: 122; 20e: 204; 23c1: 16; 28b5 ff.: 15 f.; 28c1 ff.: 15 n. 40; 28e4 ff: 16; 29a: 18 n. 45; 34e2–35c8: 15 f.; 37c4 ff.: 17 n. 43; 38d6–38e3: 14; 39a7–b6: 14 f.
Charmides passim 193 n. 24
Crito passim 77 n. 34; 44c: 16 n. 42; 45a6–46a8: **16 ff.**; 50b: 17 n. 44; 51b: 18 n. 44
Gorgias 464e: 132 n. 28
Hippias Major 297e5–298b1: 297
Hippias Minor passim 234
Ion 530b–c: 291 + n. 25; 533d–534c: 292 n. 28; 533e8–534a1: 291 + n. 27; 534c2–3: 291 + n. 27; 534c8: 292 n. 28; 536c2: 292 + n. 29
Laws 669c–670a: 297 n. 43; 700a–701b: 297 n. 43; 816: 122 f., 123 n. 14; 816–817: 122 n. 12; 935–936: 122 n. 12, 123 + n. 14; 935e: 124; 935e–936b: 46 n. 39;
Lysis passim 190; 193 n. 24
Phaedo passim 77 n. 34; 60c9–61d7: 87; 70c: 122 + n. 11; 79c: 290 n. 21; 100d: 288 n. 9, 290 + n. 21; 117d–e: 463
Phaedrus passim 188 ff., 192 n. 22; 231b–234c: 189 n. 14; 238e–241d: 189 n. 11; 240a–b: 194 n. 29; 240b: 194; 250b–c: 289 n. 14; 254–255: 190; 264c: 293 n. 32;
Philebus 48a: 122 n. 12; 49e7: 290 + n. 16; 50d–53c: **289 f.** + n. 12; 51b3: 290 + n. 17; 51c3: 290 n. 20; 51d: 289 n. 15; 53a–b: 289 n. 13; 62a–b: 290 n. 18; 64e–65a: 295 n. 37
Republic 332d7–8: 240 n. 9; 335a7–8: 240 n. 9; 343d: 181; bk. 2: 15 n. 39; bk. 2–3: 144, 155 + n. 24; 361b2: 155 n. 24; 362a3: 155 n. 24; 379d: 10 n. 23; 380a1: 155 n. 24; 383a9: 155 n. 24; 383c: 155 n. 24; 395–396: 122 n. 12; 395e: 120; 397b6–c6: 287 + n. 6; 397d5: 287 + n. 7; 399e–400a: 288 + n. 11; 399e8–10: 287 n. 6; 411b: 305 n. 78; 465c: 194; 507b9–508b4: 289 n. 14; 601a4–b8: 287 + n. 8; 601b6: 291 + n. 26; 606c: 122 n. 12
Sophist 235e–236a: 295 n. 37
Symposium passim 188 f.; 180c–185c: 187 n. 5; 184b: 190; 184d–185c: 189; 191e–192a: 217 n. 103; 211e: 288 n. 9, 290 + n. 22; 215a–b: 472 n. 42; 216d–217a: **77**; 223c–d: 119
Timaeus 33b–34b: 291 n. 24; 87cd: 295 n. 37
[Plato]
Definitions 415e: 195 n. 30
Epigram 14: 121 n. 8
Plato Comicus fr. 102 KA: 201; fr. 110 KA (*Peisandrus*): 203 n. 60; fr. 202 KA: 133 n. 30, 217 n. 103
Platonius
On the Different Sorts of Comic Poets 53–67 Perusino: 121 f. + n. 9

Plautus
Bacchides passim 402 n. 6; 54: 323 n. 9; 112: 324; 195: 324; 401: 402 n. 6; 413: 324; 427: 324; 552: 324; 1131: 322
Captivi 465: 402 n. 6; 520–524: 322f.; 530: 322f.
Epidicus 546: 323 n. 8; 709: 402 n. 6
Miles Gloriosus 248: 324; 468: 324; 562: 322; 569–570: 322; 886: 322; 736: 324; 942: 322
Pseudolus 364: 342 n. 22; 582: 322; 705–706: 322; 1243: 323; 1244: 323 n. 7
Rudens 1338–1349: 328f.; 1380–1382: 329
Stichus 590: 402 n. 6
Trinummus 338: 322
Truculentus 471–473: 323; 553: 324; 810: 323
Plinius the Elder
Natural History praef. 26: 341f.; 7.167: 401 n. 5; 9.119: 379 n. 29; 11.138: 379 n. 29; 21.162: 351 n. 49; 30.18: 350f.; 30.99: 341, 350, 356 n. 65; 31.21: 352 n. 52; 32.19: 352 n. 52; Index to 35: 338 n. 7; 35.88: 352 n. 52; 36.79: 350 n. 47; 37.75: 336 n. 3, 350 + n. 47
Plinius the Younger
Epistles 1.2.4: 412 n. 31; 1.5.11–12: 412; 1.16: **411f.**; 7.20: 412 n. 29; 9.5.2: 424 n. 50; 9.23: 412 n. 29; 9.26.8: 412 n. 31; 9.33: 353; 9.38: 414
Panegyricus 477 n. 3
Plutarch
Alcibiades 3: 203
de Communibus Notitiis 1065A–B: 451
Comparatio Alcibiadis et Marcii Coriolani 2.1: 235 n. 5; 3.3: 235 n. 5; 4.7: 235 n. 5; 16.6: 235 n. 5; 23.5–6: 235 n. 5; 24.4: 235 n. 5
Comparatio Dionis et Bruti 4.7: 234 n. 4; 8.3: 234 n. 4; 42.5: 235 n. 4
How to Tell a Flatterer from a Friend 195 n. 31
Lysander 15.5: 205
Nicias 29.2–3: 211
Moralia 348C: 298, 299 n. 46; 363C11–14: 361 n. 74; 670A: 349 n. 44; 833B: 203 n. 60
Praecepta Gerendae Reipublicae 806F–807B: 200
de Stoicorum Repugnantiis 1050F: 451
[Plutarch]
Ethica 854D: 122 n. 9
de Musica 1141C–1142B: 297 n. 43
Pollux 8.47: 223 n. 118
Propertius 1.1.3–4: 374 n. 25; 1.7.25–26: 374; 3.2: 388 n. 55; 3.24.1–2: 390; 3.25.15: 379 n. 29; 3.8.35–36: 390; 4.1: 389 n. 61; 4.1.61–66: **388f.**; 4.8.65–66: 391; 4.8.81–82: **390f.**

Quintilian
Institutio Oratoria 1.5.20: 347 n. 37; 2.2.6: 415, 419 n. 43; 3.1: 201; 3.8.44: 330 n. 20; 4.1.33: 376 n. 27; 4.2.123–124: 438 n. 17; 8.3.61ff.: 438 n. 17; 8.3.67–69: 438; 8.4: 439 n. 23; 9.2.40: 438 n. 17; 9.3.88: 327 n. 15; 10.1.65: 121 n. 8, 122 n. 9; 11.3.4: 299 + n. 47; 12.1.20: 414

Rhetorica ad Herennium 1.1: **369f.**; 1.8: 368 + n. 13; 1.8.13: 435 n. 7; 4.1.2: 379 n. 30; 4.40: 327 n. 15

Sallust
Jugurthine War 4.1–2: 376
Scholia on Aristophanes
Acharnians 67: 124; 710: 201
Birds 11: 124 n. 17; 17: 124 n. 17; 151: 124 n. 17; 168: 124 n. 17
Peace 73: 100 n. 57; 778: 337 n. 5
Wasps 74: 202; 787: 204 n. 63; 1446 (= Perry *Test.* 21): 99

Scholion on Aeschines 1.10: 220 n. 108
Scholion on Callimachus 1: Pap. Scol. Ital. 1094, p. 165 Callimachus 1 (Pfeiffer): 100 n. 55
Scholion on the *Apology* (Arethas) 180 KA: 204
SEG 30.380: 185 n. 2, 195 n. 33
Semonides fr. 13 W: 83
Seneca the Elder
Suasoriae 6.24: 420; 6.25: 420 n. 47
Seneca the Younger
de Beata Vita 27.2: 122
de Beneficiis 7.1.5–6: 401
de Brevitate Vitae 10.1.1: 401 n. 5
Consolation to Helvia 10.4: 458; 12.1.13: 379 n. 29
Consolation to Marcia 12.5: 447 n. 45
Consolation to Polybius 17.3–6: 457 f.
de Constantia Sapientis 16.4: 471; 18.1: **466 ff.**; 18.3: **466 ff.**; 18.4: 469; 19.3–4: 463 n. 25
Epistulae 47.2: 393; 47.11: 393; 47.17: 393; 47.20: 394; 76.21: 395; 77.10: 435 n. 7; 79.17: 426 n. 56; 87.32: 375; 88.40: 337, 338 n. 7, 345 f.; 88.41: 346; 91: **442 f.**; 91.1–2: 444; 94: 444 + n. 39; 95.34: 444 n. 39; 95.65: 444 n. 39; 100.10: 394; 104.21: 446 n. 41; 106.6: 409; 120: **454 ff.**, 463; 120.8: 456 n. 13; 120.9–11: 454 f.; 120.19: 457 n. 16; 122: 456 n. 14
de Ira passim 393 n. 69; 1.20.7–9: **470 f.**; 2.5.5: 394 + n. 70; 2.33: 460 n. 22; 3.5.3: **441 f.**; 3.19.2: 467; 3.21.5: **472**; 3.22.1: 445 n. 41
Naturales Quaestiones praef. 1.1–2: 473; 1.16: ch. 16 *passim*; 1.16.1: 435; 1.16.3: 436; 1.16.5: 436; 1.16.6: 436;3.18.7: 440 n. 27; 3.26.7: 435 n. 7; 4a, praef. 9: 416; 4b.7.2: 435 n. 7; 5.15.1: 435 n. 7; 6.1.4–7: 444; 6.1.10 ff.: 444; 6.2.1: 445; 6.32.12: 443 n. 37; 17.10: 434
Thyestes 117: 393 n. 67; 211–212: 393 n. 67; 214–215: 393 n. 67; 216–217: 393 n. 67; 267–268: 393 n. 67; 885–888: 392
de Tranquillitate Animi 2.5; 441 + n. 31; 14.4–10: **461 ff.**
[Seneca]
Carmen 804: 419 n. 43
Hercules Oetaeus 394 n. 71
SHA Vita Alexandri 9.4: 479 + n. 8
SHA Vita Antonini Heliogabali 1.5: 481 n. 17; 4.1–2: 485 n. 46; 4.3–4: 485 n. 46; 5.3: 486 n. 53; 5.4–5: 484 n. 44; 6.6–7: 483 n. 34; 7.4: 483 n. 34; 8.1–2: 483 n. 33; 8.6–7: 486 n. 53; 9.2: 481 n. 17; 10.1: 479 + n. 8; 12.2: 486 n. 53; 12.3: 485 + n. 45; 12.5: 486 n. 56; 17.1–7: 481 n. 17; 18.4: 481 n. 17; 19.6: 486 + n. 51; 20.4–5: 486 n. 55; 21.1: 486 n. 55; 23.1: 486 n. 55; 24.2: 486 n. 54; 26.3–4: 486 n. 54; 31.7: 484 n. 44; 32.5: 484 n. 44; 33.1: 486 + n. 54; 33.8: 481 n. 17; 34.1: 479 + n. 8
Silius Italicus
Punica 11.150: 379 n. 31; 11.150–151: 379 n. 30
Simonides *PMG* 542: 29, 38 n. 18
Simplicius
in Aristotelis Physica commentaria 164.24: 290 n. 22
Solon 10.1 DK: 249 n. 20; 10.3 DK: 249 n. 20; fr. 15 W: 33
Sophocles
Antigone 742: 11 + n. 29
Fragments 307–308 R: 114
Women of Trachis 1124: 12 + n. 30; 1137: 12 n. 30
Strabo 14.639: 90 n. 26
Strattis frr. 14–22: 121 n. 7
Suda α 2634: 338 n. 11; 3215: 336; δ 872: 337 n. 4

Suetonius
On The Life of the Caesars
Caligula 22.1: 452; 22.4: 470 n. 38; 24.2: 457 n. 15; 30.2: 467 n. 33; 53.2: 471 n. 40; 56.2: 466 n. 32; 58.2: 468 n. 34, 471 n. 40
Claudius 42.2: 362
Galba 14: 379 n. 30
Nero 9: 485 n. 47; 23.3: 415 f.; 28.1: 485 n. 47; 29: 485 n. 47; 31.2: 486 n. 56
Tiberius 70.2: 361
de Poetis 47.12–15: 437 n. 14
SVF 1.184: 454 n. 5; 2.1169: 456 n. 13; 2.1181: 451; 3.500: 454 n. 6; 3.510: 454 n. 6

Tacitus
Agricola 1.3: 376 n. 27; 46: 426 n. 56
Annales 2.2: 374; 2.88: 425 n. 54; 3.55: 426 n. 57; 4.35: 425 n. 54; 4.38: 415 n. 38
Dialogus de Oratoribus passim 23, 421 ff.; 2.1–2: 421; 15.1: **423 f.**; 18.3: 423, **424 f.**; 18.4–5: 427; 19.1–20.7: 425 n. 53; 21.1–23.4: 425 n. 53; 25.5–6: **427**; 23.6: 423, 425 f.; 25.5–6: 423; 41.5: 427 f.
Historiae 1.1: 417 n. 40
Tatian
Address to the Greeks 28.28–30: 343 n. 26, 356 n. 65; 39.13–14: 337, 338 n. 7; 39.14–15: 348 n. 39
Terence
Andria 722–723: 326
Eunuchus 79: 342 n. 22; 515: 328 f.
Heauton Timorumenos 796: 327 f.
Hecyra 157–160: 402; 159: 402 n. 6; 203: 326
Phormio 273–274: 326; 358–359: 326; 658–659: 326 f.
TGF 5.2 no. 78, frr. 838–844: 192 n. 20

Thucydides 1.141.7: 181 n. 28; 2.43.1: 150 n. 12; 2.43.1.7: 150 n. 12; 2.43.1–2: 177; 2.43.2: 177 n. 18; 6.15: 207 n. 74; 8.1: 225; 8.73: 133; 8.74: 206
Theocritus *Idylls* 5.114–115: 106
Theognis 31: 31; 41–52: 31; 54–60: 32; 143–144: 32; 152–167: 33; 159–170: 38; 164–167: 34; 314–321: **33 f.**
Theophrastus
Characters 2: 195 n. 30
[Tibullus] 3.8 (= 4.2).21–24: 391; 3.10 (= 4.4).2: 392 n. 65
Timocles 8 KA = Athen. 237d–f: 196 n. 38
Tragica Adespota TrGF 2.127 = D.S. 16.92.3: 309 n. 91
Turpilius fr. 157, Ribbeck CRF ed. 3: 323

Ulpian
Digesta 4.3.1.2: 332 f.

Valerius Maximus 1.5.8: 379 n. 31; 8.7.ext.1: 401
Velleius Paterculus 2.92.5: 425 n. 54
Vergil
Aeneid 3.326–327: 379 n. 30; 5.654–656: 400 n. 3; 11.522–525: 400 f.

Xenophon
Hiero passim 196 n. 40
Historia Graeca 1.7.2: 197; 1.7.34–35: 219; 1.7.35: 223, 224 n. 123; 2.3.12: 173, 224; 2.4.20–21: 210; 6.2.34: 130
Memorabilia 2.9.4: 196 n. 41; 2.9: **196**; 2.9.8: 196; 3.3.11–13: 210 n. 84; 3.4.4–5: 210 n. 84; 3.5.6: 210 n. 84
Oeconomicus 8.3–5: 210 n. 84
Symposium passim 188, 205; 2.14: 175 n. 16; 8: 187 n. 5, 189
de Vectigalibus 4.51–52: 211
[Xenophon]
Respublica Atheniensium 1.13–14: 210

Xenophanes 21A32 DK: 307 n. 84; 21A33.3 DK: **307**; B27 DK: 307 n. 85; B28 = Achilles *Intr. Arat.* 4.34.11 Maas: **308 f.**; B29 DK: 307 n. 85; B32 DK: 308 + n. 86

IV

GENERAL INDEX

abjection, 86, 87 n. 11, 109 + n. 81, 284
abuse, 5, 11 n. 28, 12, 42 n. 30, 46 n. 40, 54 + n. 47, 66, 73 n. 29, ch. 4 *passim*, 124 n. 16, 126, 135 + n. 33, 164, 171, ch. 8 *passim*, 243, 246, 254, 326, 466
    comic, 216
    sexual, 190 n. 17, 439
accounting, social, 403, 405, 406
Achilles, theory of evil, 9 ff.
adultery, 50, 154, 159, 191, 216, 343, 385 f., 484
Aeschylus, ch. 6 *passim*
aesthetic criteria, 64, 144, 152 + n. 18
aesthetic didaxis, 146 and ch. 6 *passim*
aesthetic evaluation, 23, 152, ch. 15 *passim*
aesthetics, 22, 65, 103 + n. 63, 145 ff., ch. 11 *passim*
alignment, of values, 1 + n. 1
Androcles, and the lion, 352 f.
anger, 35, 46 n. 39, 51, 132 n. 28, 198 n. 45, 238 f., 248, 256 n. 4, 257 f., 267 + n. 38, 277 + n. 74, n. 75, 320, 330, 377, 378, 394 n. 70, 404, 441 f., 470, 472
animals, 72 + n. 28, 78, ch. 4 *passim*, 250, 293, 294, 311, 348, 349, 360 n. 72, 393
    see also *badness and* —
anti-citizen, 21, 171, 174, 179, 181
anti-orientalism, ch. 18 *passim*
anti-sapiens, 437 n. 15
anti-value, 3, 19, 20, 22 ff., 40, 169, 170, 171, 174, 367, 407
    cf. *counter-ethos*
Apion, ch. 13 *passim*
Archilochus, 40, 43 ff., 53 f., 88, 94 n. 3, 99 + n. 53, 100 + n. 56, 101, 103 f., 110 n. 83, 112 f., 115, 158 + n. 28
arrogance, 23, 365 f., 367 ff., 481 n. 19
audience, mockery of, 164
audience response, 147 ff., 152
Auschwitz, 1
authorial intentionality, 146, ch. 6 *passim*

bad, *passim*
'bad', as clever, 322
    character, 11 n. 26, 20, 21, 119, 145 ff., 149, 155, 245, 255, 266, 276
    circumstances, 33
    citizen, 20 f., 37, ch. 7 *passim*
    emperor, 24, ch. 17 *passim*, ch. 18 *passim*
    Greek, 63
    observance of the law, 22, 327 ff.
    poetry, ch. 6 *passim*
    = *popular*, 63 ff., 79
    politicians, ch. 8 *passim*
    scholarship, 22 f., 335, 344 ff., 357 ff.
    speaking, 30, 44, 46 n. 40, 50, 53, 107
    speech acts, 19, 23 n. 47, 55
    style, ch. 6 *passim*
    = *unclassical*, 63 ff.
    = *unfit for purpose*, 319
badness, absence of good, 236
    acquired, 239
    and animals, 72 + n. 28
    and behavior, 250
    and genre, 30, ch. 2 *passim*
    and law, 327 ff.
    and rhetoric, 274 ff.
    concealing, 153 ff.
    criteria for, 41, 47 f.
    didactic role of, 441 ff., 445 f
    essentially contestable concept, 8 n. 20

functional, 4
human, 233
lexicon of, 20
many forms of, 252
mimetic, 146, 156, ch. 6 *passim*
moral, 128 f.; 133
of ancestry, 242 f.
open-textured concept, 8 n. 20
philosophical views of, 21
philosophically useful, 458
physical, 62
poetics of, 155
representation of, 20
semantics of, 7 ff.
social, 4
thin concept, 8 n. 20
bees, 90 f.
biting, 45 + n. 37, 98, 102, 103, 106, 107 + n. 75, 109 f., 112, 417 n. 40
blame, 1, 6, 19, 39 ff., 44 ff., 51, 55, 103 n. 63, 105 n. 70, 112, 151 + n. 15, 169, 225, 243, 325, 375, 417 n. 40, 471
blame poetry, 43 f.

Caligula, 24, ch. 17 *passim*, 393 n. 69, 485
career patterns, stereotyped, 207 f.
Cassius Chaerea, 466 ff.
catastrophes, 442 ff.
categorial analysis, 21, ch. 9 *passim*, 251 f.
category mistake, 35, 36, 56, 244
character, bad, 11 n. 26, 20, 21, 119, 145 ff., 149, 155, 245, 255, 266, 276
citizen, as shareholder, 176
citizen, bad, 20 f., 37, ch. 7 *passim*
concealing badness, 153 ff.
concepts
essentially contestable, 8 n. 20, 186
thin, 8 n. 20
underdescriptive, 4, 6, 8, 12, 13
underdetermination of, 4, 6, 19
contentiousness, 341
contestability, 188
see *concepts*
counter-ethos 322
courtesans, 321 ff., 402
cowardice, 13, 18, 19, 120, 128 f., 201, 221, 268, 319, 470
criteria, for badness, 41, 47 f.
for good poetry, 23, 144, 148, 152, ch. 15 *passim*
cruelty, 325 n. 12, 378, 386, 394, 461, 480 f. + n. 19, 486

death penalty, 4 ff., 259 n. 15
deception, 42 n. 28, 46, 50 ff., 223 n. 117, 320, 324, 326, 330 ff.
deformity, 66, 466, 471
demons, 2
depravity, 188, 191, 433, 437, 439
scale, 4 ff.
devaluation, 64
deviance, sexual, 199, 203, 206 f.
didactic role, of representations of badness, 441 ff., 445 f.
didaxis, aesthetic, 146 and ch. 6 *passim*
dirt, 73, 283 ff., 314
disease, 13, 240, 249 f., 357, 409
draft dodging, 20, 169, 174 ff., 202, 211 n. 85
dung, see *feces*
dung beetle, 20, ch. 4 *passim*
and genre, 100 f.
dyslogistic, nouns, 233 n. 2

earthquake, 1 n. 2, 236, 436, 444 f.
effeminacy, 24, 187, 188 n. 6, 191, 193 n. 23, 201 f., 206, 466 + n. 32, 472, 481 + n. 19, 482 + n. 22, 484 f.
Eichmann trial, 6 n. 16
emotions, cognitive aspect of, 256, 272
emperor, bad, 24, ch. 17 *passim*, ch. 18 *passim*
envy, 19, 21 f., 30, 39, 45, 47 f., 53, 55, ch. 10 *passim*, 400, 303, 406, 408, 409 n. 20
as paradigm of badness, 257
epinician, ch. 2 *passim*
errors, in judgment, 35 ff.
ethnic stereotyping, see *stereotyping*
ethnicity, 24

etymology, 23, 344ff., 349, 357, 361
Euripides, 64, 123, 127, 133, 134, 135ff., 139, ch. 6 *passim*, 297 n. 43
evaluation, 8, 23, 49, 61f., 152 n. 18, 188 n. 6, 366 + n. 4, 371, 375, 390, ch. 15 *passim*, 439, 452
  aesthetic, 23, ch. 15, *passim* esp. 409ff., 419
  see also *aesthetics*
evaluative language, 39
evil, 1f. + n. 4, 6, 9ff., 12, 14 n. 34, 18, 24, 35, 42, 46ff., 50ff., 55, 108, 119, 128, 129, 132f., 171, 194, 200, 235f., 240 n. 9, 241, 243, 248, 250, 254, 263, 278, 321 n. 4, 322, 332 n. 23, 394 n. 70, 433, 441ff., 446 n. 41, n. 42, 453, 456 n. 13, 463, 473, 479, 485
  Achilles' theory of, 9ff.
  caused by humans, 236
  cosmic, 4, 453 n. 3, 473
  metaphysical, 1 + n. 2
  moral, 1 + n. 2, 433, 453
  natural, 1 + n. 2, 236
  rhetoric of, 6
  speech, 42
  tongue, 48
exempla, negative, 24, 187, ch. 16 *passim*, ch. 17 *passim*
exemplarity, and imitation, 459f.

fable, 84ff. + n. 4, ch. 3 *passim*, 93f., 97
failure, 13, 19, 23, 37, 38, 43ff., 52, 102, 179, 234f., 243, 248, 254, 356, 366, 378, 379, 400, 401, 407f., 409 n. 20, 410, 417, 424 n. 51, 469
feces, 88f., 92, 94f. + n. 40
fire, as natural disaster, 1 n. 2, 442, 444, 478
flatterer, 21, 185f., 194ff., 200ff., 212
flies, 90, 91, 105 + n. 70, n. 71
formalism, 22, 284, 285ff., 296
freeloading, 180 n. 27
freeriders, 170
frivolity, 222 n. 115, 337, 346, 477, 481 + n. 19

genre, and badness, 30, ch. 2 *passim*
gossip, 39, 49, 50, 158, 192 n. 22, 193 + n. 26, 207
grammarians, ch. 13 *passim*
greed, 42 + n. 30, 44 n. 31, 45, 47, 54 + n. 47, 55, 100, 105, 110, 181 n. 30, 198, 200, 203 n. 60, 242, 326

harming enemies, 240
Heliogabalus, ch. 18 *passim*
Hipponax, 77, 88ff., 91 n. 28, 92f., 95, 101f., 105f., 106 n. 71, 108f., 110 n. 83, 158
Homer's ghost, 351 + n. 50
homonyms, 21, 204, 236, 243f., 251, 252
Hostius Quadra, 24, ch. 16 *passim*
hybris, 31, 45, 48, 49, 54, 55, 85, 150, 191 n. 18, 192 n. 20, 393 n. 67, 468, 471f.

Iambe, 106ff. + n. 78
iambos, 20, 84ff., 94 n. 35, n. 36, 95 + n. 39, 96, 97, 101, 106, 108 + n. 78, 110, 115
illegitimacy, 481 n. 19
impotence, 89, 91, 93, 99, 103
inferiority, 4, 86, 128f., 256 n. 8, 410
injustice, 15, 22, 240, 245 n. 17, 249, 327f., 366 n. 7, 378, 406f.
insects, ch. 4 *passim*
insult, 10 n. 24, 13, 20, 36, 79, 86, 97 n. 47, 98, 105f., 121, 124 n. 16, 126f. + n. 24, 134f., 195f., 211 n. 85, 321, 338, 340 n. 17, 341 n. 20, 343, 356, 359, 378, 461, 466ff., 471f.
intentionality, 20, ch. 6 *passim*
invective, 20, 69, 70, 72f., ch. 4 *passim*, 127ff.
irony, 24, 464ff.

jealousy, 47f., 50ff., 54, 112, 218, 256 n. 8, 271, 409, 410 n. 26

Jew-hater, 23, 340, 344 n. 27, 354, 355 ff., 359 n. 70
jingle, (*kakos kakôs*, *ponêrois kak ponêrôn* etc.) 128, 131, 134, 136, 256 n. 8, 259 (*phaulon kai phaulôn*), 262
Julius Canus, 461 ff.

kak-compounds, ch. 9 *passim*
kings, see *tyranny/tyrants*

labels, 4, 21, 32 f., 173, 185 ff., 193, 199, 341
  contestable, see *concepts*
  flexible, 32, 173, 185 f.
law, and badness, 327 ff.
laws, protecting kosmos, 219 ff.
licentiousness, 42 n. 30, 481 + n. 19, 485 f.
literary posturing, 23, 413, 417 ff.
Lucretia, rape of, 385 ff.
luxuriousness, 24, 480, 481 + n. 19, 482, 485 f.
luxury, 192, 200, 201, 247 n. 18, 434, 444, 457 n. 14, 482, 484 ff.

malice, 95, 103 n. 65, 256 n. 8, ch. 12 *passim*, 400, 403, 406, 407 n. 16, 408, 409 n. 20
material sublime, 22
materialism, 284 ff., 303 ff., 306 ff.
materiality, 22, 285, 290 + n. 21, 302
  of poetry, 144, 161 f. + n. 32
matter, 22, ch. 11 *passim*
  phenomenological perspective on, 306
meanness, 23, 402
Mephistopheles, 2 n. 6
meta-fable, 68
mimesis, 20, 119, 123, 145, 287
mimetic badness, 146, 156, ch. 6 *passim*
mirrors, 433 f., 437, 439
mockery, 20, ch. 4 *passim*
  of audience, 164
monarchy, 31
  see also *tyranny*
monsters, 24, 66, 172, 439 n. 26, 446, ch. 17 *passim*, 477, 486 f.
moral badness, 34, 128 f.; 133
moral distance, 46 + n. 38
mutability, see *vicissitude*

necromancy, 351 n. 51, 360
negative examples, 24, 187, ch. 16 *passim*, ch. 17 *passim*
  philosophical role of, 441 ff., 445 f., ch. 17 *passim*
  see also *monsters*

obfuscation, 159
obscenity, 24, 92, 95 n. 39, 121 + n. 6, 437 n. 14, 438 f.
one-upmanship, 23, 358, 360 f
open-textured concepts, 8 n. 20
oriental, 24, 481 ff.

parasite, 21, 54, 178 n. 23, 185 f. + n. 2, 194 ff. + nn., 204 n. 67, 222, 342 n. 22
pederasty, 91 f., 192 + n. 20, 194, 216 n. 101
Penelope's game, 354 + n. 57
perversion, sexual, 24, 35, 436 ff., 480
phenomenality, 285, 301
poetics of badness, 155
poetological, 41 ff.
poetry, bad, ch. 6 *passim*
politicians, bad, ch. 8 *passim*
posturing, literary, 23, 413, 417 ff.
poverty, 10 + n. 26, 33, 44 + n. 34, 108, 156, 200, 203 n. 60, 233, 454
Presocratics, 306 ff.
pricing, 71 ff., 78
pride, 23, ch. 14 *passim*, 412 n. 30
prototypes, 21, 180 + n. 26

quietism, 197, 198, 200 n. 53, 206, 214

rape, 35, 44, 192 n. 20, 386
rape, of Lucretia, 385 ff.
reciprocity, 11, 12 n. 33, 13, 21, 54 f., 104, 144, 177, 186 + n. 4, 187 ff., 189 + n. 14, 190, 192, 194 f., 197, 199, 212, 214 f., 225, 403, 407 n. 16
recognition, social, 404, 405, 407, 410

resentment, 42, 51
rhetoric, and 'badness', 274 ff.

sacrifice, of children, 482
scapegoat, 73 n. 29, 74 + n. 30, 89, 170, 173 n. 8, 175, 182
scatology, 20, ch. 4 *passim*, 121 n. 6
scholarship, and autopsy, 354
  and one-upmanship, 23, 358, 360 f.
  and tall tales, 349 ff.
  bad, 22 f., 335, 344 ff., 357 ff.
  competitive, 361
self-advertisement, 343, 353 f., 355
selfishness, 177, 179 ff., 192
self-promotion, 22, 358, 360
sex, see *perversion, sexual*
shamelessness, 13 f., 22, 24, 94 n. 38, 127, 136, 185 n. 2, 193 n. 23, 195, 217, 255, 262 n. 25, 265 n. 34, 320, 321, 323, 357 + n. 69, 358, 360, 361, 416, 439, 440 + n. 28, 485, 487
'shirkers', 169, 174 ff., 181
silence, 1, 39, 40 f.
slander, 34, 41 f., 45 n. 37, 46 f., 55, 71, 102, 107 n. 75, 113, 211 n. 85, 243 f., 254, 256, 359, 417 n. 40, 482
slaves, bad character of, 319 f., 321 + n. 4, 322 f., 333
'social accounting', 403, 405, 406
social badness, 34
Socrates, 14 ff., 64, 76 n. 32; 77 + n. 34, 112, 122 + n. 11, 135 + n. 34, 155 n. 24, 189, 194 n. 29, 204 + n. 65, + n. 67, 205, 216, 240 n. 9, 248, 286, 288, 291, 297, 454, 456 n. 11, 463, 466, 472 n. 42
spite, 112, ch. 10 *passim*, 400, 403, 407 n. 16, 408, 409 n. 20
standard of judgment, see *criteria*
standards of value, 34, 38, 47
stasis, 31
stereotyping, 20, 21, 28 ff., 43 n. 30, 187 ff., 199 ff., 207 f.
  ethnic, 24, 481 ff.
stinginess, 23, 402, 405, 407 n. 16, 410
Stoa, and evil, ch. 16 *passim*, ch. 17 *passim*
style, 144, 147, 148, 159 ff., 166, 167
  bad, ch. 6 *passim*
sublime, 22, ch. 11 *passim*, 471
  the material, 22, 306 ff., 311, 313, 314
  the immaterial, 311
sublimity, and beauty, 312 n. 96
Superbus, see *Tarquinius*
sykophancy, rhetoric of, 224
sykophant, 20 f., 169 ff., 185 and ch. 8 *passim*

Tarquinius Superbus, 23, 382 ff., 391
tax-evasion, 20, 174
teaching by example, ch. 16 *passim*, ch. 17 *passim*
theodicy, 1 + n. 2, 2 n. 4, 436
Thersites, 76, 100 n. 56, 105 n. 70, 110, 244
transgression, 54 n. 47, 90, 153, 158, 380
tyranny, 382 ff., 391, 393 f. + n. 70, 472
tyrant, 34 n. 14, 35, 36 f., 192 n. 20, 194 n. 28, 196 n. 40, 384 n. 45, 386, 461 n. 23, 466, 469, 478, 480, 483, 485, 486

ugliness, 19 f., ch. 3 *passim*, 119 f., 122, 134, 233, 466, 471, 472 + n. 42
  and Aesop, ch. 3 *passim*
  and Socrates, 76 n. 32
  and value, ch. 3 *passim*, 78 f.
  heuristic, 76, 78
underdescriptiveness, see *concepts*
underdetermination, see *concepts*
unfit for purpose, 319
un-Roman, 483, 486 and ch. 18 *passim*
utility, 72 ff.

value, standards of, 34, 38, 47
  alignment of, 1 + n. 1
vice, 2 n. 4, 24, 45, 54, 55, 129, 207 n. 74, 233, 234 n. 4, 235 n. 5, 250, 251, 255 n. 1, 268, 274, 325, 326,

359, 365 ff., 382, 385, 394, 409, 416, ch. 16 *passim*, ch. 17 *passim*, 478
and mirrors, 433 f., 437, 439
vicissitude, 30, 32, 34, 38, 40, 48, 52 f., 55
violation, of interpersonal expectations, 11 f.
vituperation, 21, 193
war, 3, 14 ff., 236, 312
whores, male, 185 ff.
wickedness, 129 ff., 243, 248 f., 254, 324, 409
women, bad character of, 319 f., 321 f., 323 ff., 326, 333
worthlessness, 71

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